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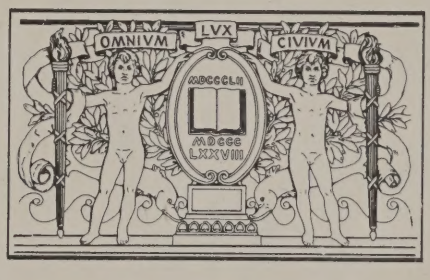

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Index to Contributors

L = Alexander Knox

P = Sir William Conrad Smith

Adeler Hartley-Burgh.

The Flapper.

A PERIODICAL WORK.

VOL I.

From TUESDAY, Feb. 2, 1796, to SATURDAY, Sep. 10, 1797.

They forgot ſeveral Times what they were about, 'till their Memories were again rouſed by their *Flappers*.

Gulliver's Voyage to Laputa.

DUBLIN:

PRINTED BY AND FOR R. E. MERCIER AND CO.

No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.

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VOL I.

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APY
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320 The Flapper: a periodical work. Nos. 1-75 (all published). *Dublin. R. E. Mercier* 2nd Feb. 1796/4th Feb. 1797. 75 issues in 1 vol. *Folio. half calf.* £80.

A good set of this scarce journal and, since it corresponds with the Bradshaw *and* Gilbert *copies, almost certainly a complete one.* Contributors, who included William Cusack Smith, Alexander Knox and Charles Kendal Bushe, wrote over pseudonyms or initials.

321 **FLORIAN. J. P.:** Galatea. A Pastoral Romance immitated from

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The Flapper.

NUMBER I.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1796.

Tu pias lætis animas reponis
Sedibus ; virgâque levem coerces
Aureâ turbam, ſuperis Deorum
Gratus & imis. HORACE, Ode to Mercury.

The Flapper, arm'd with meaner rod,
Would dare to imitate the God.
When honeſt minds have gone aſtray,
To happineſs he'd point the way;
The croud who wantonly tranſgreſs,
With touch ſeverer he'd repreſs;
And on the whole his taſk complete
Acceptably to ſmall and great.

CAPTAIN Lemuel Gulliver, in his voyage to the iſland of Laputa, has recorded this ſingular cuſtom of its extraordinary inhabitants. He obſerved, as he ſays, many perſons in the habit of ſervants *flapping* now and then the mouths and ears of thoſe who ſtood near them with blown bladders, each faſtened like a flail to the end of a ſhort ſtick, and containing a ſmall quantity of dried peaſe or little pebbles. It ſeems the minds of thoſe people were ſo taken up with intenſe ſpeculations, that they neither could ſpeak, nor attend to the diſcourſes of others, without being rouſed by ſome external action on the organs of ſpeech and hearing; for which reaſon all who were able to afford it kept among their domeſtics a *Flapper*. His buſineſs was in company to ſtrike gently the mouth of him who was to ſpeak, and the right ear of him, or them to whom the ſpeaker addreſſed himſelf, and alſo diligently to attend his maſter in his walks, and to give him a ſoft flap on his eyes when, from being wrapped up as he always was in cogitation, he ran into manifeſt danger of falling down a precipice, or bouncing his head againſt a poſt.

The ſervices for which theſe *Flappers* were employed in the flying iſland, I have voluntarily undertaken to perform in this. With all due deference to the prerogatives of the Executive Government, and to the functions of the College of Arms, I have aſſumed the office, together with the name, ſtile and title of *Flapper* to the good people of Ireland. It is my taſk to call their attention to propriety and decorum in their ſocial communications, and to warn them of ſuch dangers as may beſet their ways. As it is impoſſible for me to attend perſonally on each individual, I am driven to avail myſelf of that multiplied preſence which the preſs affords me. My blown bladder is no other than a periodical Eſſay, into which, if I can but put ſomething ſolid, I may naturally expect it will make ſome noiſe.

Captain Gulliver's account, which is the only genuine one I have read of Laputa, has given us no materials whereon to build any conjectures as to the antiquity of this office. But the father of Hiſtory has made mention of an officer of this ſort, as exiſting in a remote age at the court of Perſia. That attendant, whoſe buſineſs it was to cry out thrice every day with a loud voice at Darius's table, "Remember the Athenians and Eretrians," was no other than Darius's *Flapper*. An officer who was employed ſolely to keep alive reſentment was not likely to be of long continuance. Retiring from the falling fortunes of the Perſian monarchy, flappers ſeem to have become known in Greece. The judicious Philip of Macedon had one of them conſtantly in waiting to remind him of his mortality. In Rome we find them regular attendants on that deſcription of perſons whoſe manners required the moſt prudent circumſpection, the candidates for public honours. Gulliver conſidered their ſituation at Laputa a mean one; an erroneous opinion, adopted by him probably from his prejudices in favour of modern European manners, and which he did not ſtay long enough in the country to correct. A Flapper, I am perſuaded, muſt have been an officer of much confidence, being ſomething in the nature of an Ambaſſador between the Speaker and the Hearer, and a tutelary deity, or guardian angel to each individual. Homer, with whom the dignity of every office is rated exactly according to its utility, has aſſigned no leſs illuſtrious a perſonage as *Flapper* to his principal heroes than the Goddeſs of Wiſdom herſelf.

Though this office has not been regularly filled hitherto among us, its duties are more or leſs performed by various claſſes of perſons. Parents and friends are Flappers; all teachers are ſo in ſome reſpect; duns and old maids are flappers of a peculiar and moſt offenſive ſort. The reaſon why all theſe claſſes are not taken notice of as acting in this capacity is, that the inſtruments and the mode of uſing them are not the ſame with thoſe above deſcribed. With us the inſtruments admit of every variety correſponding with the variety of character in thoſe who employ them, and the ends for which they are deſigned. I have ſeen made uſe of for this purpoſe a token, a rod, a pedigree, a ſubpœna, a keepſake, an oak-ſtick, a memorandum book, a ſcull, a viſiting ticket, a letter, and a paper pinned on the ſleeve. The tranſition from ſome of theſe, particularly the latter ones, to a periodical paper is too obvious to require explanation.

I may not perhaps ſuppoſe that my countrymen at the preſent day are as much taken up with abſtruſe ſpeculations as the Laputans were formerly; yet I may think notwithſtanding that the regular performance here of the office of Flapper would be attended with great and general advantage. Extremes are often attended with ſimilar effects, and too little thought I believe it will readily be admitted, is at leaſt as bad as too much. The uſe of a Flapper cannot be doubted by thoſe who have ever ſeen a rich citizen importuned by a poor relation; a young heireſs kept from a party, to ſuſtain the diſcreet lectures of a maiden aunt; or a man of faſhion converſing with any

perſon

perſon except his tailor, and his valet de chambre. Some pulling out of watches may be allowed, when an old dotard begins for the eleventh time the dull narrative of his youthful fame; nor could I be angry at a little yawning when a drowſy advocate is giving two hours of a reading on Cuſtodiams, or a clerk in parliament running over the great revenue bill; but rational agents irrationally employed always provoke my ſpleen. I long for ſome able-bodied Flapper to rouſe them from liſtleſs inactivity, or to make them lay aſide their buſy trifling for ſome more important occupation. Neither in its torpid nor in its reptile ſtate has the inſect arrived at the perfection of its nature.

The introduction of Flappers exactly after the Laputan model would not, in the preſent ſtate of manners with us, be at all convenient. As we have no direct intercourſe with the flying iſland, from whence only we could import a number of regularly-educated Flappers, we ſhould be conſtrained to employ for theſe purpoſes men of our own country, but theſe in their turn would need other Flappers which would lead on to what mathematicians I think call a progreſs ad infinitum. Beſides, that to hire one of theſe officers for each grown perſon, or even for each family, would be a heavy addition to eſtabliſhments which many find ſufficiently expenſive already: for few people would be ready to diſmiſs an intelligent footman, or a prudent waiting maid, in order that they ſhould be able to employ a domeſtic, who after all might ſometimes prove no leſs troubleſome than their own conſcience. Families would run great hazard of having their ſecrets divulged on any diſpute with their Flappers, and tete-a-tetes would be entirely at an end: all thoſe faſhionable parties, which are now ſo delightfully crouded that one can ſcarce find room to ſtand, would loſe half their genteel company if each were to be attended with a Flapper, and the nation would ſuffer, if on a motion for clearing the Houſe of Commons the Members were ſuddenly to be deprived of their Flappers, and left to their own recollections. It ſeems therefore that the only practicable method with us is for ſome individual to undertake the office of Flapper-general to the community: having been the firſt to point out its advantage, I conſider myſelf entitled to the appointment, by a right ſimilar to that under which the firſt diſcoverer of an iſland takes poſſeſſion of it in the name of his Sovereign, or the inventor of a quack medicine prefers his claim for a patent.

It is certainly with great nicety that a Flapper ſhould perform his offices towards the fair ſex—and yet they would all in courſe of time be gainers, if none of them were to aſk more than ſeven queſtions without waiting for an anſwer; if not more than a certain number—perhaps at firſt not more than ten in a ſmall room (allowing however for an increaſe in proportion to the ſize of the room) ſhould be allowed to ſpeak at once; and if a book were kept, in which, but after mature deliberation, every important deciſion reſpecting the ſhape of the body, and the poſition of feathers were to be regiſtered; and for a fortnight all further diſcuſſion precluded. Such regulations, if recommended with the utmoſt reſpect (perhaps from the maſter of ceremonies' office) might I ſay be uſeful to the ladies. But modern fine gentlemen I do not

not feel myſelf inclined to treat with any kind of delicacy: I would, by act of Parliament, regulate the aſſize of day, and inſiſt on its beginning generally before two o'clock in the afternoon, and poſitively ending before ſix the next morning—I would under an heavy penalty, (not leſs than ſolitary confinement at home for half an hour, or a prohibition of the uſe of pantaloons for a day) enforce the reading of one page in ſome bound book of an octavo ſize every four and twenty hours—I would offer a reward for the invention of ſome machine to give ſtrength to their necks, or to diminiſh the heavineſs of their heads, ſo as to prevent their faces from being wholly loſt in their cravats—and I certainly would not allow them to appear more than three times in each week intoxicated at large parties, with a ſpecial exception however for thoſe caſes in which, at balls, ladies might deſire it. I cannot bear that the only employment of their natural day ſhould be to provide a lounge for what is called the evening, and the activity with which their horſe removes them from the place in which they happen to be, the only animal energy by which they are diſtinguiſhed. When I ſee the little *ſpeculation in thoſe eyes which they do glare withal*, and how conſtantly they are *bent on vacacy*, I always think on Banquo's ghoſt as deſcribed by Shakeſpeare. I cannot look on our modern petit-maitres as any other than ſhades of the men who have departed from us. *The men are gone—the brains are out.*

The utility of my office is indiſputable—I wiſh the ſame could be ſaid as to my capacity for executing it. But the cackling of the geeſe (attended, I dare ſay, with ſome *flapping*, though hiſtorians have not noticed it) wrought the ſafety of the Roman ſtate. I may be deficient in ability, but I ſet an example of uſeful zeal, and I call on the literary men of Ireland to ſupport by their occaſional correſpondence this, almoſt the firſt attempt at a periodical publication in this country. In the cauſe of decorous manners and moral improvement I hope they will ſhew they do not want a *Flapper*.

F.

DUBLIN:

Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.

[Price, Two Pence.]

The Editor will thankfully receive from the Friends of Literature, any communications they may favour him with on the ſubjects appropriated to the nature of this publication.

Perſons deſirous of having this paper ſent to the country, are requeſted to apply to the Clerks of the Roads at the General Poſt Office;—complete ſets may now be had at MERCIER'S.

[A Letter Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER II.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1796.

Ad quas res aptiſſimi erimus, in iis potiſſimum elaborabimus ; ſin aliquando neceſſitas nos ad ea detruſerit, quæ noſtri ingenii non erunt, omnis adhibenda erit cura, meditatio, diligentia, ut ea, ſi non decorè at quam minimum indecorè facere poſſimus.

CICERO de Officiis.

AS I am now actually engaged in the buſineſs of a periodical eſſay, my thoughts naturally recur to the obligations which I have contracted. I am bound to the public by my own voluntary act, and unleſs my ſervices be rejected, my retreat is impracticable. My ſenſations at this moment are ſomewhat like thoſe of voyagers, who having been too much occupied until the very ſeaſon of embarkation, to reflect fully on the ſituation into which they were about to enter, feel it with accumulated force, when from their floating vehicle they look forward on the boundleſs ocean, and back to the retiring ſhores.

The difficulties of the undertaking—not indeed overlooked before—but in idea pretty well ſurmounted, now preſent themſelves afreſh. It occurs that this ſpecies of compoſition has been made uſe of ſo often as in a great degree to have exhauſted the moſt intereſting ſubjects. It appears like a field—fruitful originally—but now ſo completely overwrought, as ſcarcely to ſeem capable of producing one ſalubrious herb or ornamental flower. It has been in the poſſeſſion of an *Addiſon* and a *Steele*—a *Johnſon* and an *Hawkſworth*—a *Moore* and a *Mackenzie*—beſides a countleſs ſucceſſion of caſual occupants, ſo that it might almoſt be feared that at this day diligence could only lead to diſappointment, and genius itſelf be forced to remain inactive from want of materials.

Such are the diſcouraging conſiderations which, aided by a chilling atmoſphere and a ſombre ſky, would this morning obtrude themſelves upon me. But even granting that they are founded in fact, it would be too much to infer that the periodical eſſay ſhould be abandoned for ever. It muſt

indeed be allowed that ſcarcely any kind of literary compoſition affords leſs room for improvement, either now or in future; this ſpecies of eſſay having riſen, almoſt on its firſt appearance in our language, to its higheſt conceivable perfection. But after this and every other abatement that can be juſtly demanded, there is no reaſon to deſpair of making uſe of the periodical eſſay again and again with a fair proſpect of ſucceſs. And perhaps it would not be difficult to ſhew, that even the circumſtances which at firſt view appear moſt diſcouraging, amount to little more on the whole, than a very powerful reaſon why the readers of a periodical eſſay at this day ſhould be candid, and the writer of it attentive and induſtrious.

For even ſuppoſing that the generality of obvious ſubjects have been handled repeatedly, and that certain late eſſay-writers have manifeſted their conſcious indigence, by merely ringing the changes on the topicks of their predeceſſors, it muſt notwithſtanding be remembered that the current of time is yet flowing, and that ſtill as it flows it is throwing forth ſomething which ingenuity may lay hold on and improve. It muſt alſo be owned, that if even there were a dearth of ſubſtantially new matter, much uſeful inſtruction might yet be given, and much even of the grace of novelty be obtained, by putting in new lights points already treated of, and ſetting them off by new aſſociations. How much might be gained even in this way, it would perhaps be difficult to aſcertain; for ſurely no good reaſon can be given why moral and intellectual truths ſhould not be ſuſceptible of as enlarged a variety of combination as muſical tones or arithmetical quantities, which from experience we are induced to conclude may be diverſified *ad infinitum*.

Beſides, it is certain that although the ſpecies of compoſition in which I am engaging is old, the ſphere of action is perfectly new. Ireland is as yet a ſort of fallow ground with reſpect to this branch of literary culture; conſequently it ſtill offers a fair field for honeſt experiment. That this country has been diſtinguiſhed by admirable eſſay-writers is moſt certain; but it is remarkable that almoſt all of them have been of the political kind. The *Drapier's Letters* in particular belong to this claſs. And of theſe, it may not only be affirmed that, notwithſtanding the trivial nature of the ſubject, they will live as long as the language in which they were written, but it may alſo be added that, if ſuitableneſs to the intended purpoſe be the rule whereby to appreciate ſuch works, perhaps even the much boaſted Engliſh *Junius* ought to ſink before them. Theſe, however, and others of a ſimilar caſt, excellent as they may be in their kind, imply no exception to the remark which I have made; and therefore it may be aſſerted that, for any thing which has been done hitherto, this country ſtill ſtands in need of a periodical eſſayiſt—to do juſtice to its virtues—to cultivate its taſte—and reſpectfully, but plainly, to animadvert upon its errors.

That the periodical eſſay has advantages above almoſt every other kind of compoſition, ſeems probable to reaſon, and is evinced by experience. To every thinking perſon it muſt be obvious, that ſhort publications, requiring no length

length of time for peruſal, little exertion of thought in order to their being underſtood, recommending themſelves by the greateſt poſſible variety, and "catching the manners living as they riſe," in order to deduce inſtruction ſuited to the circumſtances of the paſſing day, cannot fail, if tolerably executed, to be generally intereſting, and to excite a taſte for reading, and an appetite for intellectual food, even in thoſe who had never before ſtrayed beyond the limits of a newſpaper. And as to the evidence of experience, it is an acknowledged fact, that nothing ever occurred in the ſiſter kingdom that had ſo general and ſo rapid an influence on the public mind, as thoſe well known and ever memorable eſſays, The Spectator and Guardian.

Far however am I from inſinuating, or even thinking, that I am competent to do full juſtice to the work I have embarked in. Of my intention only can I ſpeak with certainty. As to the execution of the deſign my own beſt endeavours ſhall certainly not be wanting; but I pleaſe myſelf with hoping that I ſhall frequently be no more than a ſort of a literary gentleman-uſher to introduce my ſuperiors to the preſence-chamber of the public.

It may not be amiſs to apprize my readers that though I have both borrowed my title, and taken the firſt hints of my deſign, from an inſtitution in the celebrated iſland of Laputa; in doing ſo I have not omitted to caſt an attentive regard on the exigencies of my own country. I have already obſerved that the Flappers of Laputa were employed to excite recollection and preſence of mind, by the application of gentle blows as often as occaſion required. From this it may be inferred that the inhabitants of that iſland were nationally prone to abſence and inadvertence. And probably had this expedient been omitted there would have been innumerable abſurdities in their behaviour, and incoherencies in their language. Now if all Europe be not deceived, there is at leaſt in this latter reſpect ſome ſmall ſimilarity of character between the people of Laputa and my own much eſteemed countrymen, and conſequently it may be worth while to try how far a remedy, as near as circumſtances will admit, to what was effectual amongſt the former, may ſucceed when applied to the latter. I ſay as near as circumſtances will admit; for the identical remedy, however eligible in itſelf, might be highly dangerous if attempted amongſt a people celebrated for being cholerick. A ſlight blow even of a bladder would be more apt to excite the rage than the recollection of a bewildered Iriſhman; and the unfortunate practitioner could expect little elſe than to be knocked down for his pains. Earneſtly therefore as I wiſh to cure my fellow-countrymen of their follies, and much as I am inclined to think that their characteriſtick volatility may be almoſt a match for the local volatility of Laputa, ſtill for the reaſons above mentioned, I deem it prudent to go to work in a ſafer way, and to apply my flapping apparatus to the inſide rather than the outſide of the head. From the ſame motives I ſhall endeavour even in this mode to proceed with caution, and to avoid even the minuteſt circumſtance that could tend to rouſe thoſe boiſterous paſſions, on the due regulation of which human happineſs ſo much depends. Nothing

ſeems

ſeems more apt to produce this diſagreeable effect than political and theological diſputes; with theſe, therefore, the Flapper declares, once for all, he will have no concern. He profeſſes himſelf with ſincerity a ſteady friend of good government and the Chriſtian religion. As a member of ſociety he will, to the utmoſt of his power, ſupport the former; and on proper occaſions, as a writer, he will gladly contribute his quota to the maintenance of the latter. But in the contentions, whether of religious ſects or political factions, he will poſitively take no part.

That the operation of flapping was uſeful to the people of Laputa is not to be diſputed, and perhaps from practice it at length became pleaſant, as we often ſee to be the caſe in much leſs promiſing cuſtoms. Let the Iriſh Flapper then be permitted to ſay, that to combine pleaſure with utility ſhall be his earneſt and uniform endeavour, and thoſe who aſſiſt him in accompliſhing this object by their literary or moral contributions, he will regard as brethren, and revere as patriots.

L.

DUBLIN:
Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.

[Price, Two Pence.]

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[A Letter Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER III.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1796.

Et violare manu malisque audacibus orbem
Fatalis crusti.——

VIRG.

To-day, impell'd by custom's laws,
What busy hands—what eager jaws!
The first to form, the last to break
The circlet of the Shrove-tide cake.

THE principal events of life are frequently guided by accident, and effects the most important generated by causes the most trivial.—I was seated in my study a night or two ago, in deliberation on a subject for this day's *Flapper*. Various topicks had successively presented themselves, and been either discarded or postponed, when my reflections were interrupted by the shrill sound of female vociferation in the apartment under me. Upon listening more attentively, I was able to collect that the parties engaged were no other than my house-keeper and my cook-maid; and that their debate, which was on both sides carried on with considerable volubility, and I dare say with no less skill, turned upon the due proportion of eggs in the composition of a Pancake, according to the most approved authorities. *Glasse* and *Raffald*, the great pillars of the culinary art, were cited on each side, I could perceive, in the same tone of confidence and decision, with which the advocate pronounces the name of Lord *Coke*, or the physician that of *Hippocrates*. The topick of their debate, by a natural association of ideas, reminded me that Shrove-tide was at hand; and the altercation having gradually subsided into a compromise, of which I hope to taste the good effects, I mended my pen anew, snuffed my candles, and turning my chair fairly to the table, resolved to give my readers a paper upon *Shrove Tuesday*.

The memory, and almost the only memory, of the duties to which this day was originally appropriated, is preserved in its name. On this day, the eve of Lent, it was the custom of the true disciples of the Church, in early times, to *shrive*, or make auricular confession of their sins, as the fittest preparation for the ensuing season of mortification and penance. Whether the interests of religion are better promoted by the celebration of this day according to the rites and institutes of modern usage—whether the abstraction from

wordly cares which devotion inſpired is happily ſucceeded by profligate idleneſs and vulgar diſſipation—whether the exerciſe of inhuman ſports has any tendency to ſoften the ſoul to humiliation and contrition—or whether any hidden and myſterious analogy may ſubſiſt between the infliction of penance and the eating of pancakes—theſe are points which I am willing to think not ſtrictly within my province. I would rather proceed to examine the nature and origin of thoſe rites by which the modern Shrove Tueſday is diſtinguiſhed, amongſt which pancake-eating claims priority, being of the greateſt importance, as well as of the moſt general adoption.

It is not with any wiſh to make an oſtentatious diſplay of depth of knowledge, or patience of reſearch, that I introduce this enquiry with the etymology of pancake;—it is, that I may have an opportunity of expreſſing my diſſent from an opinion which has gone forth among the learned, that the word is derived from the Greek παν κακον, which ſignifies, "every thing "that is bad;" though a very profound linguiſt of my acquaintance has contended for it with great pertinacity, ever ſince a tedious confinement, occaſioned by a ſurfeit after a ſhrove-tide commencement dinner. I am rather diſpoſed to follow that laborious lexicographer and profound thinker, Johnſon, in aſcribing the word to a genuine Engliſh root, by holding it to be a combination of *pan* and *cake*, the one of Saxon, the other of Teutonick origin; together denoting, according to the ſame high authority, "thin pudding, "baked in the frying-pan."

The origin of the pancake, though wrapt in that obſcurity which at once invites and perplexes the reſearch of the antiquarian, may, I think, without temerity of conjecture, be traced up to the ſame period with the inſtitution of Shrove Tueſday itſelf; and the invention will appear to have ſprung from the original occupations of that day. Churchmen, it is ſaid, have always liked good living: Shrove Tueſday of old was to them neceſſarily a day of peculiar labour, and unuſual fatigue demands extraordinary refreſhment. Moreover, they had then before them a dreary proſpect of forty days, during which a ſimple and ſcanty fare was enjoined their tables, to typify, as well as to facilitate, the humiliation of their minds. A friend, ſo ſoon to be withdrawn, ſo ſlowly to return, it was natural to treat with more than uſual careſſes. Hence, the days immediately preceding Lent became, by degrees, a cuſtomary ſeaſon of jollity and feaſting; and the cuſtom (by the way) is ſtill preſerved in ſome parts of Chriſtendom, under the name of Carnival, a name whoſe etymology ſufficiently denotes its origin. To this is to be attributed the invention of the pancake. A reverend brother, zealous in the improvement of uſeful arts, and well qualified by long experience in the office of Superintendent of a Convent Refectory, betook himſelf to the compoſition of a diſh, worthy to cloſe and to crown the valedictory banquet. Maturity of thought, and patience of experiment, at length produced the pancake. Let its reception ſpeak its merits; amidſt all the ſchiſms and revolutions, the controverſies and the anathemas of hoſtile ſects, by all parties has the pancake been alike reſpected. In contributing to its improvement, mutual animoſities were forgotten; and it is a remarkable fact, that it owes the auxiliary flavours of lemon and of ſugar, which in theſe days of liberality are blended with ſuch happy effect, the firſt to the auſtere age of Puritaniſm, the other to the luxurious and diſſolute reign which ſucceeded. What a pity is it that the name, or at leaſt the order, of the venerable inventor of this invaluable viand has not been preſerved to the gratitude of poſterity! His memory would have deſcended to remoteſt ages, accompanying that of his fellow

Eccleſiaſtic,

Eccleſiaſtic, who diſcovered the powerful qualities of the Peruvian Bark. And indeed I cannot forbear remarking, that theſe great diſcoveries ſeem to have been pointed out to man for each other's mutual benefit; the one, wherever it is applied, ſecuring a reception or inducing a neceſſity for the other; the bark ſtrengthening the ſtomach for the pancake, and the pancake in return frequently weakening the ſtomach for the bark.

In ſupport of the dignity, the antiquity, the orthodoxy of pancake-eating, ſufficient ſurely has been ſaid. I could wiſh that my remaining ſubject were of ſuch a nature as to allow me to treat it in the ſame ſtyle. But when I proceed to conſider the peculiar ſports of Shrove Tueſday, I own I can ſcarcely retain my good humour, and am not able to ſuppreſs a mingled emotion of grief and indignation. Indeed I cannot but wonder how ſuch inhuman diverſions as Bull-baiting and Cock-fighting, and what is ſtill worſe, the throwing at Cocks, ever became favourites among a people to whom the world has (I am half inclined to fear, too haſtily) attributed an eminent degree of courage and generoſity. I rejoice however to think that theſe ſports are becoming every year leſs prevalent among us; that in moſt parts of the kingdom, ſome of them are almoſt worn out of practice, and others even out of memory. The barbarity of throwing at cocks, particularly, was always confined to the loweſt ranks, and does not now exiſt even among them, but in the remoteſt and leaſt civilized corners of the country. That it ever had exiſtence among them, I believe is fairly to be attributed, like many other of their vices, to the bad example of the higher claſſes; and I do not heſitate to pronounce that the vulgar ſport of throwing at cocks, both in England and Ireland, was no more than a copy of the *genteel* paſtime of cock-fighting, adapted to the taſte of its patrons, by a greater coarſeneſs of cruelty, and by requiring an apparatus not ſo exquiſitely barbarous. A friend of mine, reſident in a place which ſtill affords him too many opportunities of witneſſing this deteſtable practice, had ſome time ſince drawn up a paper, intended as an addreſs to the Legiſlature, on the ſubject; and I have his permiſſion to give my readers the following extract from it, which, in my opinion, diſplays the natural eloquence of feeling and benevolence:

"If an eſtimate may be taken of the manners of any people from their "favourite ſports, thoſe of the common people of *Ireland* I fear may be "pronounced wantonly, unfeelingly barbarous and cruel, from the ſingle "inſtance of their Shrove Tueſday recreations.

"The matching wild beaſts with wild beaſts, or over-matching both with "dogs, delights, and may perhaps help to form the martial ferocity of a "Ruſſian. The Spaniard's joy, though approaching much nearer to cruelty, "that of ſeeing a bull hunted down by brutes on four legs or on two, ſtill "gives the miſerable object of the ſport a ſort of fair play, and calls forth "into exerciſe the agility, ſtrength and dexterity of the man: But the hu-"man being, who can take an uſeful, domeſtic creature, ſubjected to man's "dominion for his uſe, but not to be the victim of his malignity—a crea-"ture that ſhelters himſelf under the ſame roof with the labouring man, "that chears the hours of darkneſs by his wakeful notes, and then, as the "faithful herald of the morning, calls forth man to the active duties of the "day—whoſe warning voice is recorded in Scripture to have recalled Peter "to a ſenſe of his infirmity and to tears of repentance—who has no fierce-"neſs to create danger or to leſſen pity—and who poſſeſſes a ſpirit and cou-"rage, when matched with his own ſpecies, that is not exceeded, perhaps "not equalled, in the whole animal creation.—The man who can, without

"feeling

" feeling or remorſe, tie this generous creature to a ſtake, throw at him with " clubs, and not give over while there is an appearance of life in him, is " a Savage; and, for the honour of human nature it is to be hoped, a Savage " unparalleled; unleſs we ſeek his like among Cannibals, or in Hogarth's " Progreſs of Cruelty, amongſt the atchievements of Tom Nero."

After this ſenſible and animated exordium, my friend proceeds to point out the defects in the exiſting laws, as to this offence, and the beſt means of remedying them. He obſerves, that in Ireland, where the magiſtracy is generally in the hands of clergymen and others, not poſſeſſed of the ſame influence over the lower claſſes with the proprietors of the ſoil, it is particularly neceſſary to ſupport their endeavours to aboliſh this practice by plain, poſitive laws; and he expreſſes a doubt whether any of the laws for the regulation of the police, at preſent in force, can be extended to the ſuppreſſion of aſſemblies, the object of which, cruel as it is, may be carried into execution without the ſmalleſt appearance or danger of riot.

I am ſorry that the limits of this publication will not allow me to give the humane ſentiments of my friend more at large. Whether it be neceſſary at this day to direct the arm of the Legiſlature againſt a practice which is of itſelf ſinking faſt into diſuſe, and will very ſoon, I truſt, vaniſh before the ſpreading civilization of the country, I have ſome doubt; but certain it is, that national ſports not only mark, but have alſo a tendency to form, national character: The ferocious barbarity which unhappily ranges through our country at this day, the diſgrace and deſtruction of ſocial order, might perhaps be moſt effectually controlled when its exertions are firſt diſplayed; and the ſuppreſſion of thoſe ſanguinary paſtimes to which this day is devoted, poſſibly might reſtrain, reform and reſcue ſome of the moſt promiſing candidates for the dungeon or the gibbet.

A.

D U B L I N:

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[A Letter Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER IV.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1796.

Nova ſunt ſemper: nam quod fuit ante—relictum eſt;
Fitque quod haud fuerat; momentaque cuncta novantur:
——————————nec quod fuimuſve, ſumuſve,
Cras erimus. OVID.

AMONGST thoſe who are devoted to literary purſuits, I believe there is no man who has not frequently felt ideas ariſe in his mind, which he regretted ſhould be loſt; but knew not how to preſerve. This haſty produce of a tranſient fertility finds its proper aſylum in ſuch collections as the preſent: The fanciful little crop may be made to bloom and flouriſh through the limits of a ſhort *Paper*, without more expenſe of care than it deſerves, or the mind which rears it can conveniently beſtow; and thus, by means of a periodical work, many an uſeful thought may be reſcued from oblivion, which yet is not calculated for very ſolemn diſcuſſion; nor ſo fit to be laboured with profound ſolicitude and attention, as to be thrown gaily forth, in the exuberance of the moment.

Nor are we to conclude that the merit of a work muſt be proportionate to the pains which it coſt the author in compoſing; or that, conſequently, the facility with which an eſſay may be produced, is a ground for depreciating it in the eſtimation of a reader: On the contrary, there is a grace—peculiar to what has been ſpontaneouſly produced;—and ſo far indeed is this quality from chuſing to reſide with difficulty and conſtraint,—that the perfection of art conſiſts in the concealment of its own agency, and the withdrawing every trace of toil and compulſion from our view.

In things corporeal we perceive at once the connection which there is between the eaſe and the beauty of an attitude or geſture; and perhaps the ready flexibility of the female body is related, nearly, to the ſuperior perſonal graces of the ſex. How far the ſame eaſe contributes to ſpread a charm round converſation—it would be ſuperfluous to inſiſt on, with thoſe who have mixed in poliſhed circles; where this ἀφελεια, as I think it was termed amongſt the Greeks, conſtitutes much of the elegance which marks their intercourſe. Whether the ſame obſervations will hold, as to the ſources of epiſtolary beauty, I am content to have referred for determination, to the Letters of Madame Sevigné.

And thus we ſeem, ſtep by ſtep, to have aſcended to the conſideration of thoſe eſſays, whereof a periodical work is compoſed. Theſe hold a ſort of mean, between the lightneſs of epiſtolary communication, and the gravity which belongs to treatiſes of more importance. Their literary ſtation is peculiarly advantageous in this reſpect;—that, without embarraſſing the writer with a dignity which is continually demanding effort, and feels every approach to levity and familiarity, as a diſgrace—it yet does not preclude diſcuſſion of a ſerious kind:—*Interdum tollit Comœdia vocem:*—Occaſionally, the Eſſayiſt may be ſolemn and ſublime, without exceeding his province, or provoking raillery or cenſure. Meantime, conſcious of his privilege, he has no reluctance in taking up the pen; but enters chearfully on the taſk of inſtructing his countrymen, ſince it can be done with ſo little riſk, or difficulty to himſelf.

Is he in a ſerious or a playful vein?—Neither ſtate incapacitates for his work; it only gives a colour to the paper of the day. Nor are the advantages attending this ſpecies of compoſition confined to the author. The ſame ſhortneſs of taſk—range of ſubject—and facility of performance—which procured the eſſay to be written, will enſure its being read. It comes, recommended by a curioſity, which it does not weary by its length; and beſides, as the taſtes of men are various, and the humours of each too very liable to change, the paper will probably at all times find, in numbers of thoſe amongſt whom it circulates, a mood, in uniſon with that which prevailed in the author—at the time when it was compoſed.

Periodical works, in general, are, to the learned, whether theſe be the authors or the readers, a relaxation from graver purſuits. To the former a ſort of prunings, as to the latter an acceſſion of luxuriant knowledge, which the ſtricter walks of ſcience would not endure; but which are planted out in eſſays, and preſerved, as a ſuperfluity too amiable to be flung aſide.

To the unlearned, on the other hand, they ſupply the elements of information; and ſcatter the ſeeds of taſte and virtue through a land.

How many minute abuſes are there—ſufficiently pernicious in their tendency and effect—yet which it would be much beneath the dignity of a ſolemn treatiſe to reprove!—Not to mention that the abuſe may have worked its miſchief, and paſſed away, before the author has digeſted his principles to a plan, and the bulky preventative is ready to appear. But the Flapper, on the contrary, applies his warning at the inſtant: Like Apollo, he touches the ear of his countryman, and rouzes him, in time, from his dangerous reverie.

It is not the taſk of him who undertakes a work of uniformity and length—to paint thoſe tranſient hues of error, which vaniſh like the rainbow. The *ſubſtance* of vice and folly is what muſt conſtitute *his* ſole materials. Thoſe permanent and abſtract defects, which are eſſential to the infirmities of our nature, and do not depend merely on the manners of the day. To ſketch theſe latter in lively colours, and ſhame the fluttering owners with their glare, is the province of him who fills the office of a Flapper.

But

But does the periodical writer—content, then, with being, for the preſent, uſeful, renounce all pretenſions to poſthumous reputation? By no means. We have already noticed his extenſive choice of topicks: He may often fall on thoſe which are ſo allied with human nature, as to intereſt every people, in every age. Meantime, by exhibiting the faſhions of the hour, he ſecures attention from his cotemporaries (who annex an eminent ſhare of importance to the follies which ſurround them) and contributes to the ſucceſs of that correction which he has undertaken.

Nor, perhaps, will ſuch pictures of the time prove unintereſting details hereafter to the Philoſopher or Hiſtorian. Should he, for inſtance, who undertook to record the manners of Queen Anne's reign, do ill to conſult the *Spectator* on the ſubject, and partly draw his information from that ſource? —With what avidity do we ſeek for ſuch (widely illuſtrative) details of ancient manners! An avidity, which would be far leſs ſtinted than it is, if *Aulus Gellius* had not ſtood alone: if periodical works had, in thoſe days, been in uſe; and had deſcended to poſterity, with their freight of intereſting minutiæ. ——To the Philoſopher what can be more deſerving of attention than the whimſical variety of appearance, which, at different periods, and under different circumſtances, human folly has aſſumed! What more worthy of him than ſtill, like *Ariſteus*, to keep his hold, and in all its fantaſtic ſhapes, to recognize the identity of that weakneſs which he has ſubdued!

Indeed, it is but indirectly that *ſuch* parts of a Flapper's work can intereſt future times:—As mere ſatires, they muſt be as tranſient as the paſſing folly which they deſcribe. His directer claim on the attention of poſterity—the author muſt reſt on ſubjects that are more durable;—on thoſe fundamental errors, which (connecting the hiſtories of the paſt, with our obſervations of the preſent) we find it to be independent of all modifications of time and circumſtance:—To be inherent in man's degraded nature; and as laſting as the depravity from whence they ſpring.

The Eſſayiſt who treats of cravats, or pantaloons, though at the very moment when the ephemeral folly is appearing, deſcends ſomewhat from even the minor dignity of *his* ſtation; and ſacrifices his conſequence to his deſire of being uſeful. But when a practice thus intrinſically frivolous is extinct, and lives only in the ſatire which deſcribes it, how can it attract the attention of poſterity?

Suppoſe an eſſay of Edward the Fourth's age had come down to us, written againſt the ſhoes which were peculiar to thoſe times; with what indifference ſhould we peruſe a ſatire, demonſtrating the folly, which—now that faſhion had removed her veil, was no longer queſtionable! Yet it is no improbable conjecture that a cuſtom ſhould have provoked the cenſure of an eſſay, which was found to deſerve the reſtriction of a ſtatute.

The *Antiquarian* who met with ſuch a paper, overlooking the ſatire, would content himſelf with regiſtering this anecdote of ancient manners; and would enter in his common-place book that about the year 1460 the Engliſh wore

piked

piked ſhoes, the pike connected to the knee by a chain; and that this ſtrange cuſtom was regulated by a ſumptuary law, giving an excluſive privilege to to perſons of rank and fortune, of dreſſing themſelves ſo inconveniently.

The *Philoſopher*, ſetting off the follies of one age againſt thoſe of another, and ſtriking an average of human abſurdity, would balance ſurpluſage of ſhoe with ſuperfluity of cravat, and thus ſettle the account between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries;—while the Man of Wit might take occaſion to remark how folly, which in former ages had ſubdued only the extremities, and extended its trammels no higher than the knee, was now beginning to invade the nobler parts; and had made nearer approaches to the intellectual capital than could have happened, if this latter were well garriſoned with ſenſe.

Or if his fancy ran on politics, he might contraſt the humility of that ſtatutable faſhion, which, in Edward's days denoted rank and pre-eminence by chains, with the democratic cravat of the preſent reign, which makes no difference in necks; but, like the paraſite in Juvenal,

"—longum invalidi collum cervicibus *æquat*
"Herculis,—Antæum procul à tellure tenentis."

To return,—it muſt be confeſſed, upon the whole, that the rank of the Eſſayiſt is inferior to that of many on the literary eſtabliſhment. Yet we have ſeen that the very inferiority of his ſtation is attended with ſome advantages, both to himſelf and others, which might, if he moved in a higher ſphere, be wanting. For it is—in the commonwealth of letters—as in every well conſtituted ſociety, where the relative ſituation of each is not only beneficial to the whole, but in many reſpects advantageous to the humbler individual;—compenſating want of power with exemption from care; and abating difficulties and duties—as it diminiſhes conſequence and enjoyments:—Diſtributing reſpective virtues for the practice of each rank; humility for grandeur; and for lowlineſs, independent reſignation; and making the duty of every man, like that of the Flapper, conſiſt much in promoting the welfare of his neighbour,—keeping within his ſphere, and doing the good which is ſuitable to his ſtation.

P.

DUBLIN:
Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.

[Price, Two Pence.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER V.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1796.

Mens agitat molem.

VIRGIL.

AMONG the various departments of my office of Flapper to the public, I conceive that the exciting and forming in the minds of the youth of both ſexes a taſte for literary improvement occupies a principal place. In thoſe ranks, on which the ſubordination of civilized ſociety hath conferred the opportunity of mental refinement, the poſſeſſion of this very privilege of leiſure gives occaſion to numberleſs errors and abuſes, from which their inferiors are in a great degree precluded by the narrowneſs of their ſituation. Could I ſucceed in diffuſing a love of uſeful reading, my taſk would be much facilitated. The feeling of vacant unemployed being, which the activity of our nature cannot ſuffer without torture, would then be removed, and the allurements of vice and folly would loſe a powerful incentive. I might hope that another generation ſhould not behold its gentry waſting their hours in the balcony of a gaming club, or retiring to their eſtates without any other object than their hereditary war againſt the brute creation. But this is far from being the whole advantage I ſhould gain. I ſhould not only have diſpoſſeſſed the enemy of one of his ſtrongeſt poſts, but ſhould have made a lodgment, which would enable me to batter his other ſtrongholds. The love of uſeful reading would not only by occupying the mind guard it from the intruſion of folly and vice, but would introduce into it principles of the moſt ſalutary influence on our conduct in more active ſcenes.

I have already hinted that my countrymen are not diſtinguiſhed by a very general propenſity to literary purſuits; and frequently have I heard an eloquent and learned book-auctioneer in this city pathetically lament that he

found no purchaſers of his books except the gentlemen of the law, from whom the public ſtill required profeſſional information. I feel however much pleaſure in obſerving ſymptoms of a growing tendency to mental improvement ſpread themſelves through the kingdom in the eſtabliſhment of Reading Societies and Public Libraries. I ſhall watch with attention theſe appearances of convaleſcence in the intellectual character of my countrymen, and in my capacity of Flapper ſhall endeavour to do, what it has been ſaid is all that the phyſician can do in the diſeaſes of the body, *clap Nature on the back.*

The fair part of my young readers will probably think that I have been giving a very unſeaſonable lecture, ſince a conſiderable part of their time is actually employed in reading. No ſooner, I admit, does the *new* Novel, which again tells in moving language the oft-told tale of perplexed courtſhips, of titled lovers, of ſuper-human excellence ſhrouded in obſcurity, of unexpected affluence, of deſpair, and finally of marriage; no ſooner, I acknowledge, does this delightful effuſion of ſome induſtrious ſentimental writer come forth from the preſs, than every moment, which the more important cares of dreſs and viſiting can ſpare, is eagerly devoted to the peruſal. But I muſt requeſt my fair readers will recollect that I ſpoke of *uſeful* reading, and I have weighty doubts of the utility of this claſs of reading. Doctor Johnſon, ſpeaking of the great dramatick writer of our ſiſter kingdom, has obſerved that "love is only one of many paſſions, and as it has "no great influence upon the ſum of life, it has little operation in the "dramas of a poet, who caught his ideas from the living world, and exhi-"bited only what he ſaw before him." That romantick and enthuſiaſtick attachment, which takes ſuch entire poſſeſſion of the mind as wholly to overcome all conſiderations of prudence and all regard for the relative duties of life, is not very frequently found in the living world, and ſurely is not neceſſary to the happineſs of ſociety. It is indeed the buſineſs of the Novel-writer, as of the Poet, to repreſent, not what ordinarily happens, but what may be conceived poſſible to have happened; and in repreſenting love as the grand ſpring of human conduct he is ſure of an advocate in every female breaſt. The flattering picture, which exhibits rapture and agony as created by the ſmiles or frowns of beauty, is beheld with willing admiration; and the ſuperfluous labour of ſearching into the real principles which actuate the complicated ſyſtem of ſociety, is ſpared. Thus the lazineſs, or perhaps the incapacity, of writers on the one part, and the vanity of readers on the other, have ſupported a ſpecies of compoſition, which, where it aſpires beyond the amuſement of an idle hour, can only tend to miſlead the expectations of the youthful mind. The female, whoſe notions of life have been derived from this ſource, will imagine, that youth is loſt, if not paſſed in rapture and deſpair; that all conſiderations of prudence in forming that connection,

connection, on which ſo much of happineſs depends, are ſordid and unworthy of refined ſouls; and that in the object of the over-ruling attachment, without which life is but a blank, every perfection of the mind muſt be united with all the graces of exterior elegance. Where great talents have been employed in the grouping and colouring the picture of human life, we may indeed occaſionally with advantage give new energy to the higher feelings of our minds, by contemplating the embelliſhed repreſentation, and mix ſomething of heroiſm with the plain, though more uſeful, principles of common conduct; but the perſon, whoſe rules of action ſhould be wholly taken from theſe ideal forms, muſt, like that illuſtrious character, who is the firſt reader of Novels upon record, the renowned Knight of La Mancha, miſtake the ſimple utility of the windmill for the ſublime terror of the giant, and peaceful flocks of ſheep for hoſtile armies.

The truth I believe is, that this bad effect is not, except in very young minds, produced in any great degree. I am inclined to ſuſpect that my fair readers are in general too wiſe to miſtake thoſe pictures for reſemblances of real life, and to form their conduct by the rules which they ſupply. But much miſchief I apprehend may be aſcribed to them, though they ſhould be conſidered only as the reſource of female leiſure, caught at with eagerneſs, and, like the toys of infancy, abandoned with indifference when their novelty is at an end. The mind that has long been accuſtomed to be amuſed without preſent exertion to underſtand, or wiſh to recollect, will become too feeble to make thoſe efforts which alone can procure it rational improvement. Whatever advantages may be derived from uſeful reading, are loſt to a perſon labouring under this artificial imbecillity. Hiſtory requires perſevering attention, moral diſcuſſion demands ſerioufneſs, and even poetry claims the exerciſe of fancy; all which are too fatiguing to the reader of novels, reduced by habit to *ſecond childiſhneſs and mere oblivion.*

But whilſt I blame the practice of reading thoſe compoſitions, which by the courteſy of the age are indiſcriminately called *Novels*, though few of them have any juſt pretenſions to the name, I would not be underſtood to condemn the ſtudy of authentick biography. There is not any branch of general reading which is more entertaining, or may be rendered more uſeful. In the narrative of the life of an individual every one may find the common feelings of his nature intereſted; with ſympathetic admiration he may catch the virtues, and with friendly concern he may lament and avoid the errors, of the hero of the ſtory. In the room then of exaggerated and fanciful exhibitions of human actions, I would ſubſtitute accounts of real characters in real ſituations; and this claſs of reading would be particularly adapted to ſuch as have been mentally enervated by a courſe of novels. The tranſition from feigned to true biography would not be too difficult, and they might gradually be led to conſider improvement, and not mere amuſement, as the

object

object of their purſuit. Were I to continue farther their literary regimen, I would preſcribe repeated and attentive peruſals of the works of thoſe periodical writers who have adorned and improved our ſiſter-iſland, and whoſe ſteps I am humbly endeavouring to follow. By perſevering in this courſe of *alteratives* they would recover the poſſeſſion of their underſtandings. They would delight in the page which informed their reaſon or expanded their imagination.

To thoſe who have not ſunk into the languor which I have deſcribed, or may be recovered from it by the method which I have pointed out, Hiſtory preſents her ample records for the inſtruction, and Poetry her delightful imagery, for the refinement of their minds. In this extenſive range they may be abundantly exerciſed. Juſt and enlarged views of human nature will be the valuable fruit of hiſtorical reading, and the elegant graces of a poliſhed fancy will reward attention to the muſe. But there is one book, which the ſtudent of hiſtory may peruſe with advantage for its genuineneſs and antiquity, the lover of poetry for its ſublimity and pathos, and the moraliſt for its unequalled regulations of human conduct. I am almoſt afraid to ſay I mean the *Bible*.

E.

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[A Letter Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER VI.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1796.

—*Inſignis hic uſus eſt, ut,* verborum *ſenſu expoſito,* rem *intelligas.*

ELSNER.

AFTER I left college and entered into the buſy hum of men, I was for ſome time much perplexed by many things I had learned at the univerſity; and thought I ſhould be obliged to give up moſt of the opinions I had imbibed there. But among them all, none puzzled me more than the principle I had adopted from Mr. Locke, that *words are the ſigns of ideas.* "Well," thought I, "if this be ſo, ſurely they muſt have the largeſt ſtock of ideas who have the "moſt words." But trying the experiment with ſome of the fair ſex, to whoſe acquaintance I happened to be introduced, I began to be wofully diſappointed; and to call in queſtion the truth of my principle.—However I comforted myſelf with the reflection that theſe were women, and that Mr. Locke had calculated his ſyſtem for men. So, in order to make my obſervations on the male ſex with the greateſt advantage, I got myſelf admitted a member of ſome ſocieties in town where I knew there was a great deal of ſpeaking; but here my diſappointment was not a whit leſs than before. Often did I hear a wordy orator, for whoſe little ſcrap of meaning I looked long, and ſcarcely diſcovered it at length buried in a heap of ſounds: ſo that I began to conclude that words, inſtead of being the ſigns of ideas, rather indicated the want of them.—There was indeed one ſpeaker that I never heard without admiration, his language was ſuch a happy index of his mind; and his little ſtream of little ideas flowed with ſuch an eaſy current through a meagre vocabulary. There never was any ſubject ſtarted on which he appeared at a loſs for thoughts, ſuch as *he* conſidered worth communicating; or for expreſſions, ſuch as were preciſely adapted to his thoughts. I have viewed him talking on with cool ſelf-complacence; and believed that he could talk for ever, ſomething neither ſenſe nor nonſenſe. "Happy Marcus!" often have I ſaid to myſelf; "how kind has nature been "to him! had he more meaning he would not be able to expreſs it; and "had he a better vocabulary, his puny ſentiments would be cruſhed under its "weight."

I once attempted to ſpeak on a queſtion that I felt to be important, and of which I knew myſelf fully maſter. Two or three had handled it before me,

and my attention was wearied in attempting to follow them through *foreſts of no meaning*. I roſe ſplenetic and impatient, not doubting but that I ſhould expoſe the abſurdity of the former ſpeakers; and be able by a few ſentences to determine the point in debate to the ſatisfaction of all. But, alas! when I attempted to give utterance to my thoughts, what was my ſurprize and confuſion to find myſelf like a bottle turned upſide down, and ſo full that nothing can come out? I ſat down, mortified to ſee myſelf an object of pity to ſome whom I had juſt before regarded with contempt. "Surely," thought I, "Mr. "Locke muſt be wrong, *words* cannot be the ſigns of ideas."

I reſolved however to make another trial; and ſallied out into the ſtreet, to obſerve the more *free* converſation of the male ſex. I had walked but a few paces, when I perceived two of our modern officers, with their round hats and feathers, ſword-knots and pantaloons, approaching each other; and heard one addreſſing his brother warrior as they paſſed,—"egh! Jack, damn me, how do "you do? egh, damn me!"—"Bleſs me!" ſaid I, "what can be the *meaning* of "this? what can be the *ideas* of which this man's words are the ſigns?"—It was an enquiry for which I could find no ſatisfactory ſolution; but it led me to a cloſer examination of the principle, which I found ſo inapplicable to the different caſes in which I had tried it. I went to my lodgings ruminating on the ſubject; and paſſed the evening in wiſhes that the ſcience of phyſiognomy were brought to ſuch perfection, that we might have ſome ſurer criterion for examining the *minds* of men than their words appear to afford us; and in thinking how many perſons in that caſe would be aſhamed to *ſhew their faces*.

Yet I was ſtill unwilling to give up the opinion I had been taught in college; and am happy to ſay that more mature reflection and a greater acquaintance with men and manners have convinced me of its truth. I find that words are indeed the ſigns of ideas; but to *interpret* theſe ſigns aright—here lies the difficulty, and here is a wide field opened for the exerciſe of art and the improvements of critical obſervation. In this the *interpreters* that we have hitherto uſed have rather led us aſtray than afforded us aſſiſtance. Dr. Johnſon, for inſtance, has no doubt in one view deſerved well of Engliſh ſcholars, and explained the language for certain purpoſes with learning and preciſion. But he has explained it for men of literature and thought; and that ſurely is not the character of mankind in general. Dr. Johnſon was a ſcholar, and borrowed his interpretations from ſcholars, and wrote his dictionary for the uſe of ſcholars. But what are ſcholars to us? We want a dictionary calculated for the practical uſe of converſation, not for the idle theories of ſtudents; compiled by a perſon acquainted more with men than books, and in which the words ſhall be explained according to the ſenſe in which they are actually uſed in life, not that in which ſome plodding writers may have uſed them. Of ſuch a work (which I heſitate not to pronounce abſolutely neceſſary to render our words the adequate ſigns of our ideas) I intend ſhortly to publiſh a proſpectus; and I have deſigned this paper to prepare the mind of the public for it.

I know

I know the reputation of Johnſon and the weight of his authority will be apt to excite a prejudice againſt my undertaking. But let any man attempt to *interpret* ten ſentences, uttered by males or females in any faſhionable circle, according to the definitions given in Johnſon's dictionary, and thus to form a judgment of the ideas of the ſpeakers, and he will perceive immediately that I enter on untrodden ground. Beſides, we know that Johnſon's dictionary has long been out of uſe among thoſe claſſes for whoſe benefit mine is intended; as is evident from the entire diſregard they ſhew even to his orthography.—Some however, who acknowledge the neceſſity of the work, may apprehend that I, as a ſtudious thinking man am not ſo well qualified for its execution as a man of faſhion who knows the world. But I aſſure ſuch (though I ſay it that ought not to ſay it) that I am not a mere ſcholar, but have for many years employed myſelf in the ſtudy of living manners. And though I know that much more than ſcholaſtic learning is required for interpreting the language of the preſent world, yet I muſt ſay that it requires alſo more than is to be found in the mere man of faſhion. It requires thought and attentive obſervation, which he has never been accuſtomed to exerciſe. It needs indeed a microſcopic eye to diſcern that atom of meaning that lurks in the mind of thoſe who have been accuſtomed to talk apparently without any.—Little thanks to Dr. Johnſon or to others for being able to compile dictionaries by which we can interpret books that contain a ſolid maſs of reaſoning or ſentiment, clothed in the language of preciſion. But to catch the fleeting ſhadows of meaning that glide through the mind of a fine gentleman or fine lady, and diſcover them embodied in the vague expreſſions that drop from their careleſs lips—*hic labor*, *hoc opus*—here is the work for a uſeful lexicographer; and this is the arduous taſk which I would boldly undertake.

My ſkill muſt be particularly exerted in the interpretation of *expletives*, which conſtitute ſo great a part of modern language. But I ſhall not, as ſome have abſurdly done, confine this claſs to ſingle words; but ſhew many entire ſentences that belong to it. Some of theſe I long thought had no meaning at all: but I now ſee that though they do not expreſs any one preciſe idea, yet they indicate ſome temper or diſpoſition of the ſpeaker's mind, and thus afford no *feeble aid* to polite converſation.

For inſtance, on the word *by*, I would obſerve that its moſt frequent uſe at preſent is in oaths, which are too numerous for particular explanation; but that they are groſſly ignorant who conceive them to mean nothing, no leſs than they who think them intended for confirming the truth of an aſſertion. Their real deſign is to ſhew the ſpeaker to be a perſon of too much ſpirit to fear God or regard his prohibition againſt ſwearing. They afford a wonderful zeſt to converſation; and were introduced by ſome *amateurs* in the art of *ſinning*, who found they needed a contrivance of this kind to gratify their taſte without trouble or expenſe, at all times and in all companies. The freqeuency of oaths however

however is no longer a deciſive mark of good breeding in gentlemen, as their footmen now ſwear very near as much as themſelves. But in ladies it is reckoned the higheſt faſhion; their waiting-women, through ſome ſcruple, not having yet adopted the cuſtom.

In ſuch a work as I propoſe, it would be nonſenſical to borrow my authorities from books;—for who reads them now? They did well enough in dictionaries that were deſigned for the interpretation of books or of the language of bookiſh men. But in a dictionary which is intended to expound *living language* (for the former I reckon *dead*) my authorities muſt be taken from *living men.*

One advantage that I propoſe by this undertaking is to exhibit their own *minds* to thoſe who are unaccuſtomed to reflection and averſe to the trouble of it. They need only examine the definitions I ſhall give of their *words*, to perceive what they have never yet looked at.

But here an objection will be ſtarted, that the ſize of a bound volume will be inconſiſtent with its uſefulneſs to this claſs of readers. And I would grant the objection to have weight, but that my plan will enable me to make this dictionary of the ſmalleſt pocket ſize, as I ſhall leave out a great majority of the words in Doctor Johnſon's. All words that relate only to theological, literary or ſcientific ſubjects, may without any loſs to the faſhionable world be omitted; and this will reduce the volume ſo conſiderably, that I think, if printed on a *wire wove* paper and *hot preſſed*, it cannot fail of being read.

Perhaps in a future paper I may reſume the ſubject, and give ſome ſpecimens of the work. Meanwhile, any perſons who wiſh to become ſubſcribers to the FLAPPER'S DICTIONARY OF MODERN LANGUAGE, are requeſted to leave their names at the Printer's.

R.

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[A Letter Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER VII.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1796.

Sed quis cuſtodes cuſtodiet ipſos?
Shew me the Man, who dare the Flapper flap.

TO THE FLAPPER.

SIR,

I AM a College lad, fixed at my father's deſire in a lodging in town, which for the firſt two years, and until I ſhould have time to get ſome wiſdom and experience, he thought preferable to chambers in College. Hither my aunt, a ſiſter of my mother, followed me; a good creature, I do aſſure you; and ſo you would ſay, if you knew her as well as I do; ſhe ſaid ſhe came to take care of me, for I was ſuppoſed to be her favourite, if ſhe could have one among nephews and nieces that ſhe loved ſo well, and as I think ſo equally. On her account therefore, as well as your's, I am ſorry any difference ſhould have ariſen between you; but it ſeems a difference there is, and I'll tell you how it happened.

Having, both of us, great curioſity about the Flapper, I took care to have the firſt number of it ready at breakfaſt time, on the day of its publication. I perceived ſhe read it at firſt with great delight; when ſuddenly, about the middle of it, I ſaw her countenance change; ſhe looked angry, threw down the paper, put her tea-ſpoon into her empty cup before ſhe had taken half her breakfaſt; took up the paper again, read it to the end, looked more than half pleaſed, in ſhort looked as if ſhe muſt be pleaſed whether ſhe would or not, took the peremptory tea-ſpoon out of the cup and finiſhed her breakfaſt with her uſual good humour. She told me why ſhe was angry with you, and pointed out what you ſaid about old maids, which ſhe thought much too ſevere, inſiſting upon it, ſhe would write to the Flapper about it. After dinner that day ſhe read to me the letter ſhe had written. I approved of it highly, and told her I would carry it to the Printer's box: "No," ſays ſhe, "it is yet in-"complete, and I don't know how to ſupply what is wanting: for you ſee "the Flapper gives a Motto, and will expect one, I ſuppoſe in Latin too; can "you help me?"

I was ſome days thinking about it, but to no purpoſe ; for I could recollect nothing about Flapping in Virgil, Horace, or Juvenal, nor even in Lucian. At length a thought came into my head : ‘ Let me ſee, Madam,’ ſaid I, ‘ as ‘ the Flapper is to tell other people their duty, and you think he wants to be ‘ told it himſelf, perhaps ſomething could be made out of the laſt Theme I ‘ got in the College, *Sed quis cuſtodes cuſtodiet ipſos ;* the literal Engliſh of ‘ which is, *Who'll keep the keepers*, or as our landlord would ſay, who is a ‘ Director of St. Mark's Watch, *Who'll watch the Watchmen?*’ ‘ A good ‘ thought, Jack,’ ſays my aunt ; and muſing half a minute, ‘ I have it now,’ ſays ſhe ; and taking up her pen wrote as above.

I hope, Sir, you will not think me wrong in giving you this account how the whole matter happened : and now ſince I have my pen in hand let me tell you how much the good lady is pleaſed with the Flapper as far as it has gone. And yet, Sir, I cannot help differing from her, when ſhe refuſes to give a preference to the paper of this day about pancakes, which I think the beſt of the three.

I wiſh, however, you had not ſo eaſily given up the Greek etymology, which is ſo much more learned than the other, and ſo obvious too. The tranſlation to be ſure, *every thing that is bad*, makes againſt my opinion as well as my taſte, for I think the pancake to be *every thing that is good ;* but then, Sir, you know there is a figure in rhetoric which calls things by their contraries.

I am in great hopes you will be prepared againſt Eaſter Monday to give us a like diſſertation upon the excellence of tanſy-pudding. Be ſo good, Sir, as to turn it in your thoughts for me, and you will oblige one who reſolves to be your conſtant reader,

JACK SMART.

TO THE FLAPPER.

SIR,

IF it be a misfortune to have been overlooked by your ſex, and left in that ſtate of life in which Providence has placed me, then indeed I am unfortunately an Old Maid. But as I do not ſee any fault of mine in the one caſe, and dare not to repine in the other, I muſt look for misfortune elſewhere, the misfortune of being obliged to take my ſhare in the undiſtinguiſhing ſarcaſm, which, without thought, I hope, and therefore without feeling, you have thrown out ſo unmercifully againſt a defenceleſs ſet of Beings, the ſolitary Siſterhood of old Maidens.

I don't allude to that line in the firſt number of the Flapper, where you ſuppoſe one of my nieces *kept from a party to ſuſtain the diſcreet lectures of a Maiden aunt ;* No, Sir, I can paſs over with a forgiving ſimper the tranſient flippancy of a light paragraph.

But when you ſay, *Duns and old Maids are Flappers of a moſt peculiar and offenſive ſort*, I own you hurt every feeling and excite reſentment in a breaſt where, thirty-ſix years ago at leaſt I was told, perhaps flattered, that ſweetneſs of temper reſided ; when I find myſelf marked out by ſuch a pen as your's, as an object not of ridicule but contempt, nor of contempt but averſion ; for that is your idea ;

You

You may, and ſo perhaps the generality of your readers will, make light of what you have ſaid; call it a harmleſs gaiety of humour played off on the ſudden, the hackneyed joke againſt old Maids, which none of them who have any ſenſe will ever lay to heart: But you know, Sir, from the Fable, that what is play to you may be death to us; that *trifles light as air* affect not only the jealous, but thoſe alſo who may be ſore from neglect: you muſt know, that ſuch muſt perſonate a complacency which they do not feel, if they ſeem to be at eaſe under ſuch unmerited treatment. Do then, good Sir, for I am cool again, withdraw that indiſcriminate cenſure, and if it has been your ill fortune to meet with none of my ſort who are not worthy of ſuch ſeverity, take, I entreat you, a ſhort extract of my life, drawn indeed by myſelf and perhaps with partiality, yet ſurely without vanity; for I am not known to you, and never ſhall, nor have any ambition to be heard of but among a few beloved relations and friends, who will vouch for the truth of my ſtory.

Tho' poſſeſſed of little or no fortune, yet, in my younger days, I too had my flatterers, who ſaid my perſon and appearance were more than paſſable, my behaviour modeſt and unaffected; that I had much ſweetneſs of temper, ſomething beyond a plain underſtanding, ſome ſhare of information, ſome talent for writing and converſation, without wiſhing to make an oſtentatious diſplay of any of theſe: in ſhort (to make uſe of a vulgar phraſe) I was ſaid to be *the making of a very good Wife*; 'but, poor thing, ſhe has no money.'

I had my offers alſo, but from ſuch as I thought were not entitled to aſk me: and being too proud to depreciate myſelf by ſtepping out of my rank, I accepted above thirty years ago the invitation of a married ſiſter, with whom I have lived ever ſince; and am happy to ſay that my endeavours to prove both agreeable and uſeful in the family have not been ineffectual.

I have been uſeful in the interior management and œconomy of the houſe, uſeful to my nephews and nieces, than whom I could hardly love children of my own better; my ſolitary ſtate has made me neither envious nor moroſe. the natural evenneſs of my temper has been preſerved under approaching infirmities of conſtitution; and all theſe happy effects have ariſen, I truſt, from the overruling influence of a religious reſignation to the Divine Will.

My dear ſiſter ſays nothing; yet I am at no loſs to read approbation and gratitude in her eyes. But my brother-in-law, generous man! he gives his thoughts utterance, takes every occaſion to introduce my importance to him, to his wife, his children, his domeſtics; and declares he could not have kept houſe without me. This egotiſm would ill become me, if it were introduced to vindicate only one individual; but allow me, Sir, to aſſure you, for I ſpeak from knowledge, that there are within the narrow circle of my acquaintance ſix or ſeven females in a ſimilar ſituation, but of ſuperior character, who like me have had the misfortune, as it ſeems, to live unmarried, within a few years of that period when human ſtrength is but labour and ſorrow;—and ſuch females too as would have bleſſed as well as adorned the married ſtate. But, alas! after having paſſed through early life with the good opinion, good word, and good wiſh of all who knew them; they have found nothing beyond that, no offers, at leaſt no ſuitable offers of marriage; becauſe they had no money, none of that mammon, that idol of the human heart, to which the undiſtinguiſhing of your ſex, the ſelfiſh, the miſcalculators of human happineſs, pay their worſhip, and in purſuit of which, domeſtic happineſs has, in many fatal, and in many more melancholy inſtances, been undervalued, if not wholly ſacrificed.

In

In behalf of theſe and ſuch as theſe I entreat you to retract or to ſoften what you have ſaid: and give me leave to ſay that when I do ſo I think I am conſulting the credit and reputation of your paper, which muſt ſuffer by ſo unjuſt and unqualified a reflection; at leaſt I am gratifying my own ſtrong partiality for it, and endeavouring to confirm the happy preſage I have formed in my own mind, that from the ſpecimens already exhibited, you will do much toward the reformation as well as entertainment of the Age we live in, and contribute to raiſe and eſtabliſh the Iriſh character for genius, talents, taſte and execution among the nations, who have hitherto conſidered this country as their ſilent ſiſter.

Believe me, Sir, that I am, with great truth,

Your ſincere well-wiſher and friend;

Let me add alſo, your faithful, yet reſpectful Flapper,

AN OLD MAIDEN.

The Motto of this paper has been furniſhed by the amiable correſpondents to whom I this day yield my place. I did not think to have been called ſo ſoon to make the *amende honorable*. But—*to err is human;* and I doubt not but in my female correſpondent's younger days, the remainder of Mr. Pope's line may have been quoted and applied to *her*. However that be, where an error has been committed and is pointed out, it would be *leſs* than human not to *confeſs* it. The objectionable ſentence in my firſt paper on which ſhe remarks, might perhaps admit an explanation which would tend to vindicate me in ſome meaſure from the charge of groundleſs ſeverity. But I think it better to acknowledge at once that my expreſſion was incautious, and to evince my acquieſcence in my correſpondent's ſentiments by giving her letter in the ſame form of artleſs benevolence in which I received it—my Editor alſo having informed me that my firſt number was out of print, I have ſo far altered the paſſage in queſtion in the ſecond impreſſion, which has come out this day, as to mark the diſtinction which ever ought to be made between thoſe who experience a juſt return for the coquetry of their youth, in that neglect and mortification which they are doomed to in the evening of life, and thoſe who by cultivating their underſtanding and their taſte have qualified themſelves to give a flap to the Flapper, and contribute their quota to the ſtock of public amuſement and inſtruction.

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The Flapper.

NUMBER VIII.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1796.

Adhibenda eſt quædam reverentia adverſus homines, et optimi cujuſque, et reliquorum.
Cicero de Officiis.

A certain politeneſs is to be obſerved towards all perſons, not only to the moſt elevated, but even the meaneſt.

ALTHOUGH I hope the caſe of the writer of the following letter is an uncommon one, yet the tranſgreſſions he mentions are ſo obviouſly violations of the rules of good breeding, that his complaint deſerves ſome notice: I ſhall therefore ſubmit it to my readers in his own words.

TO THE FLAPPER.

SIR,

AT a period when politeneſs is ſo univerſally talked of, and ſuppoſed to be ſo well underſtood, it may appear incredible that any breaches of its laws ſhould be committed in faſhionable circles, yet that ſuch things are, I can teſtify from my own experience, which was lately purchaſed not only by a ſeries of teaſing and diſagreeable ſenſations, but alſo at a conſiderable pecuniary expence.

I hate routes, Mr. Flapper, but my wife made it a point, and there is no gainſaying any thing ſhe takes into her head; I therefore forſook my whiſt club for one night, and accompanied her to a party at Lady Catharine Matadores, a woman of high faſhion, with whom ſhe has lately cultivated a *card* acquaintance. Immediately on our entrance her Ladyſhip preſented me with a card, and I was ſeated at a whiſt table with a gentleman and two ladies whom I had never ſeen before. The fair one, who fell to my lot to aſſiſt in the conteſt for victory, commenced her duty, whilſt I was aſſorting my cards, by telling me it was neceſſary for me to keep up my hand, and not give people the advantage of ſeeing my game. I really felt uneaſy at the inſinuation this caution conveyed againſt the moral character of our antagoniſts, but my attention

was ſoon wholly engroſſed by homefelt cares, for my notable helpmate entered upon a courſe of reprehenſion which drew the eyes of the whole company upon us. I have ſtudied Hoyle indefatigably, Sir, and am a tolerable maſter of his difficult caſes, yet this lady thought it proper to ridicule my judgment, railing at my careleſſneſs, my forgetfulneſs, wondering people who knew nothing of the game ever attempted to play, and bleſſing her ſtars the rubber was almoſt over; 'till at length (more attentive to my ſuppoſed miſdemeanours than to her own play) ſhe made a revoke, which being perceived by our opponents, they levied the forfeiture, and drew down, not where it was deſerved, but upon my devoted head, ſuch a torrent of obloquy and reproach—in fine, Sir, I never received ſuch a lecture from—no, not even from my wife.

This misfortune having accelerated the concluſion of the rubber, I would fain have cut out, but Lady Catharine declaring ſhe poſitively could not do without me, I was compelled to ſit ſtill. However, I had the ſatisfaction of ſeeing my late partner remove to another table, and her place occupied by a very pretty girl of eighteen. On my obtaining this new aſſociate I began to recover my ſpirits, as I well knew young ladies muſt never ſeem to be out of temper, and was beſides perſuaded by the remarkable ſweetneſs and gentleneſs of my partner's countenance, that I had nothing to fear.—But alas! my exultation was ſoon at an end. A new ſource of vexation opened to me. The firſt hand was not finiſhed, when the entrance of a young gentleman, whoſe hair was particularly well dreſſed, arreſted my partner's attention ſo entirely, that ſhe had none left to beſtow on any other object. A condeſcending glance ſoon invited this beau of ill omen to take up his ſtand behind her chair, from which enviable ſituation he buzzed ſo many pretty compliments into her ear, that ſhe could ſcarcely diſtinguiſh the ace of diamonds from the ten of clubs. To be ſure ſhe made me a great number of excuſes in the ſofteſt cadence imaginable, and ſmiled very bewitchingly at her perpetual blunders, but really, Mr. Flapper, making love is quite mal-a-propos at half guinea whiſt.

At length the ſecond rubber was ended, and I drew forth my purſe to ſatisfy the winners and pay my cards, being fully determined to retire: but Lady Catharine made it a particular requeſt that I would not break up a table till ſome more company ſhould come in, and I was *nolens volens* compelled to renew my drudgery.

Chance now beſtowed upon me an aſſociate, the firſt glimpſe of whoſe viſage gave me every reaſon to be aſſured that her attention would not be interrupted by the impertinence of tender addreſſes. Nature was in a niggard humour at her formation, and time had utterly demoliſhed the few charms ſhe might originally have poſſeſſed. In a word, Sir, a more forbidding countenance you cannot conceive than her's; and in ſpight of all the aids of dreſs ſhe was viſibly an old woman. From theſe indications, I imagined I had at laſt ſome proſpect of retrieving my loſſes—I

ſhuffled

ſhuffled rhe cards with renovated courage. But judge of my chagrin, Sir, my partner looked careleſsly over her hand and began humming with great earneſtneſs,

" When William at eve meets me down at the ſtile,
" How ſweet is the nightingale's ſong."

Mr. Flapper, if you hate incongruity as much as I do, I need not make any comment on the choice of her ſong. I liſtened to the firſt ſtanza with tolerable patience, but on her proceeding to the ſecond I ventured to interrupt the rueful ſtrain, by civilly entreating her to mind her play; but in vain: ſhe ſtill perſiſted, and notwithſtanding all my hints, that I never could give attention to cards if there was any noiſe in the room, and that I was ſeverely afflicted with a nervous head-ach, I could not obtain quarter. She alternately ſqualled and croaked the ſong an hundred times over, and would undoubtedly have perſevered, if our loſs of the rubber had not obliged her to ceaſe.

I once more roſe to make a precipitate retreat, but Lady Catharine was too quick for me. She now approached with a grave intelligent looking gentleman, whom ſhe told me ſhe had purpoſely ſelected as my partner, in order to furniſh me with an opportunity of getting ſome revenge for the ſevere uſage fortune had given me during the evening—this was ſo conſiderate and good-natured on the part of Lady Catharine, that I could not well refuſe. I therefore acquieſced, and upon ſeeing my partner's method of play, and our winning a game, I took up a bet on the rubber to bring myſelf home. The ſecond game we were unſucceſsful, but our cards alone were in fault. The third went on promiſingly—we were eight to nine—I held two honours, but forbore calling, as the queen was turned up by our adverſaries. However, before they got one trick we made five—but juſt as I was ſure of being on the point of a triumph, the laurel was torn from my brow. My partner threw away the game by paſſing an opportunity of trumping the ſtrong ſuit of our opponents.—" Bleſs me, " Sir," cried I, " how could you be ſo remiſs?"—" My dear Sir," replied my partner—" this Ruſſian event ſet me quite aſtray; I was conſidering whether " the new Czar would turn out the preſent miniſtry there, and I actually " forgot what ſuit was trumps."

This manœuvre decided the fate of the fourth rubber, and that of my bet alſo—Lady Catharine, perceiving what had happened, advanced—but all her eloquence, although backed by the authority of my wife, was ineffectually exerted to perſuade me to ſtay a moment longer in a place where I had been ſo unmercifully pillaged and perſecuted, and I departed haſtily with a firm determination of never entering the houſe again.

Now, Sir, as you are a reformer of manners, it is certainly your province to direct in all matters of this nature, and I requeſt you will inform all whom it may concern, that intemperate railing, wilful diſtraction, impertinent

nent noiſe, and abſence of mind, are all deviations from that politeneſs, in which no perſon converſant in the uſages of genteel life ſhould be found deficient—to be ſure, the firſt of my partners may ſay ſhe plays to gain a ſum of money which ſhe cannot afford to loſe, and my laſt one may reſt his juſtification upon analogical principles, the playing odd tricks and ſcrambling for honours naturally enough bringing the affairs of a new reign to mind; but pray, Sir, what rational plea can be alleged for the introduction of love and muſic ſo out of ſeaſon?

I am, Sir,

Your moſt humble and obedient Servant,

PAUL PLIANT.

From the writings of Xenophon and Plutarch we may gather many valuable ſpecimens of the manner of conducting the *converſationes* of their times. The Romans by a cuſtom derived from the Greeks, uſually appointed a perſon to preſide over and regulate their meetings, whether convivial or literary; but neither the regulations cited by Lipſius, the rules of the ancient ſympoſium, nor the Leges Conviviales of Ben Jonſon, would apply to the caſe of my correſpondent.—A ſort of temporary maſter of the revels, or *arbiter elegantiarum*, might be uſeful in preventing thoſe ſomnolencies of fine breeding, but the denizens of the beau monde are all too lazy, or too much wrapt up in ſelf-contemplation, to exert the laborious attention, which would be requiſite for the well-governing aſſemblies ſo numerous as are at preſent collected at our faſhionable meetings. It is therefore incumbent on each individual to regulate his own behaviour: to conſider that when he mixes with the ſocial circle he is no longer his own man, but the man of the company, and to bear in mind the maxim of the Marquis of Hallifax, who ſays, "Singularity may be good ſenſe "at home, but it muſt not go much abroad."

G.

DUBLIN:

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The Flapper.

NUMBER IX.

TUESDAY, MARCH 1, 1796.

Si bene me novi, non Viſcum pluris amicum,
Non Varium facies: nam quis me ſcribere plures
Aut citiùs poſſit verſus?

HORACE.

If well myſelf I know,

Not Viſcus, though your friend of yore,
Not Varius could engage you more;
For who can write melodious lays
With greater elegance or eaſe?

FRANCIS.

TO THE FLAPPER.

'DEAR SIR,

'NOTHING can give me more exquiſite delight than to find the favourite plan of my heart taken up by a gentleman of your talent and liberality. Yes, Mr. Flapper, long had I wiſhed to ſee a periodical paper, to which all our contributions might be acceptable, eſtabliſhed on a ſolid and ſatisfactory ſcale. I longed to ſee among my countrymen ſomething like the ſpectatorial effuſions of the pen of an Addiſon, or the luminous effulgence of Johnſonian ratiocination. You, Sir, have nobly come forward to give us ſentiment not without ſenſe, and with delicacy to wage war againſt depravity. You have called on the literary men of Ireland to aſſiſt you in the combat. You ſhall have the aſſiſtance you deſire—I beg leave to enliſt under your banners.'

'You have recommended authentic and intereſting biography.—Hear from a ſketch of my hiſtory my capability of being uſeful. With the preſs I have been familiar from my infancy—my father was a journeyman printer—he had the good fortune to marry the ſiſter of an attorney well known in criminal practice. My uncle was ſtruck with my early indications of genius, and I was deſtined to be brought up for his buſineſs, which had the powerful recommendation of requiring no capital and little expence of education. Still, however, my father entertained hopes that I might (though he admitted it was not uſual with attornies) cut a conſpicuous figure in the ranks of literature. "If I am to judge," ſaid he, "by the authors whoſe works paſs every day

" through my hands, education is not at all neceſſary.—I have not for " theſe nine years been called on to ſet a ſingle Greek type, and for " Latin and French, enough of them can be learned from our modern " Engliſh." To inform my mind and teach me the elegancies of ſtyle, he continually furniſhed me with new works, magazines, tranſlated pamphlets and newſpaper eſſays, and while other boys at Engliſh ſchools were loſing their time in reading obſolete authors who flouriſhed forty years ago, I caught the language of the day—Gibbon and Junius were my only claſſics.'

'But much as my genius was cultivated by faſhionable reading, it was ripened much more by converſation. My father's lodging was near the theatre, and he was always employed to print the bills of the day. He was the man to raiſe a deſerving performer to the rank among the *dramatis perſonæ* which an envious manager might have refuſed him—he was the man by a lucky error of the preſs to introduce a friend with the ſtriking periphraſis of " the part of —— " to be performed by, &c." No wonder, then, that his room was crowded by the ſons of Theſpis, while they had him to celebrate them, and me to excite their admiration. No wonder that their wit and daſh, their theatrical alluſions, comic hits and lofty declamation, ſhould impreſs themſelves powerfully on my fancy. While I was yet in my childhood they thought me worthy of being introduced to Mr. Puffim, the doer of the theatrical paragraphs, and I actually had at the age of thirteen the honour of ſpouting before Mr. Phiz and Mr. Stilts, the principal performers of the day in the tragic and comic walks. But, however ſuch inſtructive company might have improved my talents, they did not ſerve either my father's health or his pocket—he never lived, poor man, to behold the greatneſs to which he educated me—he died in wretched circumſtances the very year I was apprenticed to my uncle. Hard drinking and late hours, Mr. Flapper—time flies ſwift.'

'The attorney profeſſion I could not endure—the buſtle of the courts had in it ſomething pleaſant and intereſting, but the drudgery of office buſineſs was much below my talents and my education. For two years I neglected it—and the third I abdicated at once my uncle's office and his friendſhip.—I do not repent the ſacrifice.—Genius of Ireland, it was thy inſpiring! I was born for the public—to have made me an attorney would have been a robbery and a parricide.'

'Diſengaged from ſervile forms, my theatrical friends invited me to the liſts of dramatic fame—I embraced the liberal counſel—I rehearſed ſome principal ſcenes of Beverly in the Gameſter, the part in which I was to make my *debut*, to a group of choſen friends whom I had invited to dine with me on my expected profits, two days before the performance—they ſwore they never ſaw ſuch an exhibition, and drank largely to my ſucceſs. The important evening came—big with the fate—had my feelings ſuffered me to go through the part, I may without vanity ſay a Dublin audience never would have been feaſted with ſo rich a treat—but they deſerved their puniſhment—my reception was a chilling ſilence. And why this coldneſs? Becauſe, forſooth, I had a blemiſh in one of my eyes. This, however, neither I nor my friends could think diſfigured me—and I defy any perſon, Mr. Flapper, to produce a line in the play to prove that Beverly ſaw with both eyes. For a time I bore up againſt this coldneſs, but in my firſt ſcene with Stukely, ſome vulgar wag from the ſhilling gallery, roaring out that Stukely had got at the blind ſide of me, the whole audience burſt into ſuch peals of laughter as no man's conſciouſneſs of his own merit could ſupport—I retired indignant from a profeſſion where figure ſtands for talent and expreſſion yields to externals.'

'Inſtantly

'Inſtantly, by the recommendation of the ingenious and the learned Mr. Puffim I became a profeſſed author—and in the profeſſion I may ſafely ſay I have acquired a celebrity far beyond my brothers of the pen for variety and velocity. From the denſe advertiſement which pays duty by the line, to the open octavo, where the price riſes with the pages—from the matter-of fact paragraph to the conſtitutional diſſertation—no ſize, nor ſpecies of compoſition, has been untried by me—nothing tried which has not ſucceeded. In thirteen years I have raiſed three newſpapers from the dawn of their *proſpectus* to a meridian effulgeſcence, and conducted them to a not diſhonourable occultation, thence to revive in form more grateful and on a plan ameliorated. I have given to the world twenty-three pamphlets—twenty of them none was hardy enough to anſwer, the other three were anſwered by myſelf—I have produced five novels, forty-four *verbatim* ſpeeches, beſides the ordinary debates in the third perſon—ſeventy addreſſes with the anſwers to moſt of them—ſeven farces—outlines and ſpecimen of an epic poem for a ſubſcription—and a comedy in three acts, never yet performed. I am an approved hand at drawing up the ſeconds' reports of duels and diſplaying addreſſes on corporation-boxes. Yet think, Mr. Flapper, how ill I have been treated. I had juſt put my printer into the very high road of fame and fortune—I had juſt exalted him to the pillory—when, oh! cowardice and ingratitude, he in an inſtant diſcontinued the buſineſs of the preſs, and neither printed nor paid for my Brutus on the tithe-laws—my Drapier's letter on the partition of Poland, my Phocion to the commiſſioners of the lottery, nor my Brian Boiromhe on the Telegraph. All theſe, my dear Sir, with a variegated aſſortment of other faſhionable things on hands, are at your ſervice. I am ready to commit myſelf with you, Mr. Flapper, either on half profits or at a ſtated price *per* page of a ſtipulated number of lines, ſpecifying ſo many words to each line. Not havingthe happineſs of a perſonal acquaintance, you cannot be angry however at my requiring your printer as a collateral ſecurity.'

'May I not without vanity preſume to think that to your work I might be highly ſerviceable. Young authors—I mean no diſparagement—ſometimes want materials. Now, Mr. Flapper, I know the *town*—I know the *day*—I can procure the firſt information of every *intrigue* in the *polite*, and every *quarrel* in the *political* world—I can glance at the *recent anecdote*—I can hint the *ſagacious conjecture*—at a *narrative* I am not to be excelled, at a *character* I can't be equalled.'

'But why do I talk, Sir, of materials— dreſs is the only article of faſhionable value, and to this has my attention been devoted.—You may not be able to throw plain ſenſe into *orientality*. You may not have three and an half pages of an *allegory* within eaſy call—call then, Sir, upon me, and you ſhall not be unheeded. I can follow up the *metaphor* and run down the *alliteration*—poiſe the *parallelifm*—meaſure out the *lapidary line*—hit off the *Gallic idiom*—familiarize the *Latin phraſeology*—and for the *pittoreſque*, it is univerſally admitted that none ever *daſhed the canvas* with greater *boldneſs of deſign*, or enriched his pages with more *mellowneſs of colouring*.'

But in the *typographic* department, where you, Sir, muſt be at the mercy of your printer and corrector; there, Sir, is my ſupremacy. 'Tis for my experience alone to know the importance of an *Italic* or a *capital*, the proper place of the *daſh* and the *aſteriſk*—to aſcertain the due proportion of *annotation* to *text*, of *margin* to *matter*. I can follow up the ſonorous period of *ſounds ſeſquipedal* with the *what's*, *why's*, *where's*, *when's* of briſk interrogation—I plunge the ſoul of ſenſibility in delicate diſtreſs with the *ah's* and *oh's* of printed pathos, and raiſe the *ordinary* to the *portentous* and the *ſublime*, by the triple note of

admiring

admiring aſtoniſhment! ! ! All this experience, Mr. Flapper, will I devote to you on the moſt reaſonable terms. Believe me, you will conſult œconomy in dealing with me, who on occaſion could ſpace you out a ſcanty letter through your whole ſheet, and by the embelliſhments of the preſs prevent the merits of your compoſition from loſing the notice of any eye. Pleaſe to direct to me, No. 76, Pimlico, in the attic ſtory. I ſhall wait on you any hour next Sunday you appoint.'

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your moſt devoted, humble Servant,

TIM. TITLEPAGE.'

'P. S. If you wiſh to enter into the negociation, pleaſe to ſend by my *chargè dès affaires*, through whom you receive this, a preliminary guinea.'

On ſending the above letter to the preſs, I was ſoon informed it could not be done. I read every word of it over again, and found nothing ſeditious or libellous in it, but every thing perfectly innocent and characteriſtic from beginning to end. I therefore ſent to my printer to reprimand him, but found the reaſon ſuch as muſt preclude my cloſing with Mr. Titlepage's propoſal. The quantity of ſpaces—daſhes—italics—capitals, &c. &c. which would be neceſſary for giving his communications to the public, my printer ſays he cannot engage to furniſh—he therefore requeſts I will make an apology for his not doing juſtice, in the typographic department, to the letter of my correſpondent. I really have another reaſon for not entering into any permanent agreement with Mr. Titlepage.—I am an old-faſhioned fellow, and neither approve of the materials he might ſupply, nor the dreſs in which he would exhibit them. And his diſplay of the preſs, his writing, if I may ſo call it, to the eye, I only conſider as an accommodation to inattention in the reader, and a ſuccedaneum for feebleneſs and obſcurity in the writer. My inſtant compliance with the hint in his poſtſcript, has however ſecured me, as I underſtand, his eſteem and good wiſhes.

F.

D U B L I N:

Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.

[Price, Two Pence.]

The Editor will thankfully receive from the Friends of Literature, any communications they may favour him with on the ſubjects appropriated to the nature of this publication.

Perſons deſirous of having this paper ſent to the country, are requeſted to apply at MERCIER's.

[A Letter Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER X.

SATURDAY, MARCH 5, 1796.

MILITIA eſt potior : Quid enim ?

HORACE.

Fir'd with the glories of the "tented field"
The 'prentice ſcorns the vulgar pen to wield :
The Freſh-man, panting for the bright array,
Caſts with contempt his *ſombre* gown away :
All ranks, all ages, crowd the martial band—
A military madneſs rules the land—
—— Wherefore is this, I prithee ?——

A FEW days ago the following letter was left at the houſe of my publiſher. The evil of which it complains has been for ſome time in my contemplation ; but my correſpondent has treated the ſubject in a manner ſo natural and ſo forcible, that I willingly lay his caſe before the Reader, in the ſame language in which it was conveyed to me.

TO THE FLAPPER.

"SIR,

"I am Teacher to a ſmall congregation of Diſſenters in a remote part of "the North of Ireland : and although many years have elapſed ſince I have "found time or inclination for the exerciſe of a literary talent, which, in "my youthful days I was fond of cultivating, I now take up the pen willingly, "to thank you for the pleaſure which your publication, even in its infancy, "has afforded me, and for the hope it has excited that its progreſs will be at- "tended with advantage, as doubtleſs it will with credit, to our native coun- "try. Under the favourable opinion which I have formed of the Flapper, I "am deſirous to open my heart to him on a ſubject which occupies it wholly ; "and though you ſhould not think proper to make my complaint public, it "will be ſome relief to me to have unburdened my mind even to you.

"My family, Sir, conſiſts of a ſon and a daughter : ſuch a courſe of edu- "cation as the village in which I live afforded, together with the beſt attention "of my wife and myſelf, were chearfully beſtowed upon them. At twelve "years of age I put Tom apprentice to a reſpectable linen-merchant in this "neighbourhood ; the boy was then a tolerable proficient in his grammar, "wrote a good hand, and knew ſomething of arithmetic ; his temper and diſ- "poſitions were amiable ; as to his perſon, his mother dwelt on its beauty "with rapture ; and truly, Sir, it muſt be admitted that the boy was more "than paſſable. During his apprenticeſhip his behaviour was in general very "good ; indeed, when occaſionally he viſited home, I obſerved ſomewhat of "a growing paſſion for finery, which I thought was too much encouraged "both by my wife and daughter : but when I hinted it to them, they defended

" themſelves ſo warmly, that I did not care to urge the matter; though very " often, when they were employed in tambouring waiſtcoats or ſpotting cra- " vats for my ſon, I was obliged to ſubmit to the mortification of a rent in " my ſhirt or a hole in my ſtocking. At the end of five years my ſon return- " ed home; and as he was then too young to enter into buſineſs, I endeavour- " ed to engage him in ſuch a courſe of reading as might be moſt uſeful " to him; but in this I was quite unſucceſsful; for Tom was hand- " ſome; and the young females of our acquaintance occupied ſo much " of his time, that he had very little to beſtow either upon his books or upon " me. At this period it was that the preſent Militia eſtabliſhment was inſti- " tuted; and one morning I received a very polite letter from colonel Daſhem, " the commander of our county regiment, offering me an enſigncy for my " ſon; kindly obſerving, 'that he was a fine lad, and wanted nothing but a " little knowledge of the world.' My wife and daughter were delighted with " the idea of ſeeing Tom in regimentals; he himſelf had no objection, and " the matter was ſoon ſettled: and, ſhall I own it to you, Mr. Flapper? the " repugnance to the ſcheme which I felt at firſt, totally diſſipated, when I ſaw " the martial appearance of my boy, all glittering in gold and ſcarlet, at the " firſt muſter of the regiment, before they left the county.

" In ſome months came an order to march to Dublin: and though I had " not been in town for many years, I recollected that it was an expenſive place, " and that my ſon was to appear there in the rank of a gentleman; to enable " him to do ſo, I ſent him a preſent of ten guineas (the utmoſt I could ſpare) " and a letter of advice; to which my wife added ſix pair of white ſtockings " of her own knitting, and my daughter a lock of hair. It was ſeveral weeks " after the regiment reached Dublin before I heard from Tom; my wife was " full of apprehenſions, and I myſelf not without my anxieties: at length " came a very dutiful and affectionate letter, begging a remittance, which was " ſpeedily made. After another interval of a month or two, my ſon gave us " the joyful intelligence that he had obtained leave of abſence and would pay " us a viſit in a few days; the time of his arrival was expected with impati- " ence, and, at laſt, the ſtage coach ſtopped at my door, and out jumped Tom, " with a brother officer who was kind enough to accompany him. I could not " help obſerving that my ſon had loſt his plumpneſs and healthy complexion, " but my wife and daughter inſiſted that he looked genteeler than ever; I own " there was ſomething of ſwagger and ſelf-opinion in his manner, which I am " told is at preſent thought genteel; though, in your time and mine, Mr. " Flapper, it would have been reckoned impudence and ill-breeding. At " dinner, (in the preparation of which, by the way, my wife had exerted her- " ſelf with great ſucceſs) I endeavoured to lead my gueſts into that train of " converſation in which I ſuppoſed them beſt qualified to excel. I ſpoke of " the affairs of the Continent: extolled the ſteadineſs of the Auſtrian troops, " and condemned the defection of the Pruſſians; I dwelt with animation on " the uniform bravery diſplayed by the Britiſh army, and from thence advert- " ed to the beauty and good diſcipline of our own national forces: here, I " obſerved, my young gentlemen looked at each other with great complacen- " cy; but upon the affairs of the war, they were not at all diſpoſed to be " communicative; my enquiries were anſwered with a nod or a ſhake of the " head, and my conjectures noticed only by a ſhrug. In ſhort, I found them " either unwilling or unable to engage in military topicks. Thus foiled, I ſhift- " ed my ground, and left an open to my ſon, on a ſubject with which I well " knew he was acquainted. I boaſted of the flouriſhing ſtate of our ſtaple " manufacture, exulted in the great and encreaſing demand for our linens, " and in the opulence which in conſequence was rapidly ſpreading over our

" country;

" country; but, turning my eyes to Tom, in order to enquire the average " prices of the laſt Dublin market, I perceived a glow in his face and a bluſh " upon his cheek, which ſpoke embarraſſment; a frown from my wife, and " a wink from my daughter Nancy confirmed my ſuſpicions; and between our- " ſelves, Mr. Flapper, I believe he was aſhamed of being convicted, before a " brother officer, of having been once apprentice to a linen-draper. After " this ſecond defeat, I made no further efforts to ſupply converſation: indeed " it was not neceſſary; for my viſitors had begun to reliſh my wife's currant " whiſkey punch; (though by the way, Tom had made wry faces at it at firſt, " and mentioned ſomething to his companion about *claret* and the *meſs*) and " if they bore no part with me, I in my turn, was totally unable to join with " them in the ſubjects of their diſcourſe. They ſpoke indeed of the *panorama*, " and the *promenade*; of theſe the newſpapers had given me ſome informati- " on; but while I expreſſed admiration of the artiſt's ſkill in the execution of " the firſt, and ventured to hint diſapprobation of the latter, I was ſilenced " at once by my ſon's aſſuring me (and he thought fit to add the aſſeveration " of an oath) that one was an *horrid bore*, and the other a *decent lounge*.

" Thus incapable of underſtanding, or of being underſtood, I remained in " ſilent aſtoniſhment at the volubility which my young heroes alternately diſ- " played; though I muſt confeſs that I was a little hurt at finding my impor- " tance evidently leſſened, even in the eyes of my wife and daughter, from " whom I thought I had a natural right to claim deference and attention. " They were, however, wholly engaged in learning the hiſtory of modern " faſhions, a ſcience of which the captain ſeemed a maſter; he harangued up- " on high feathers and low heels, and preſſed on my daughter with a warmth " which alarmed me, the neceſſity of having her neck bared, and her waiſt " thickened. At length he ſpoke of the theatre; at the mention of it I ralli- " ed once more; for in my early days I had been a lover of the drama, " and the impreſſions which it had made were not effaced; I felt them kin- " dle, as I endeavoured to expreſs them: but here, again, I was unintelligible; " I found it impoſſible to convey to my viſitors an idea of the theatre, as I had " known it; the performers to whom their applauſe was confined, were of a dif- " ferent ſpecies from thoſe to which I had been accuſtomed: and juſt when I " thought that I had faſtened the captain's attention to an examination of " *Garrick*'s performance of *Richard*, he turned haſtily away from me, to cri- " ticiſe the *poney races* with my ſon, and for half an hour, I was forced to " liſten to a warm controverſy upon the comparative merits of the 'white " and gold,' and 'the blue with ſilver ſeams.'

" But Sir, I am afraid I am tedious; and yet I have much to ſay—If my ſon's " follies had been confined to his own family, our partiality would have eaſily " overlooked or forgiven them; but he ſeemed even proud of diſplaying them; " he has treated ſome of my worthieſt neighbours with the utmoſt inſolence, and " received their proffers of friendly hoſpitality with contempt; he was far ad- " vanced in an intrigue with our dairy maid, when my wife diſcovered and pre- " vented it; he was actually about to ſend a challenge to his old maſter the linen " merchant for beginning a very kind letter of invitation, 'Mr. Thomas ——, " Sir,' and concluding it with an abſtract of the price of linen at the preced- " ing market—in a word, I was weary of his impertinence, and I own I was " not very ſorry when his leave of abſence expired, and his return to Dublin was " unavoidable.

" It was ſome months after, that I was called to town, by an occaſion ſo ſud- " den, that I had not time to apprize my ſon of my intention. I arrived late at " night; and having reſolved to breakfaſt with him the next morning, I pleaſed " myſelf, as I walked toward the Barrack, with thinking how agreeably my viſit

" would

" would ſurprize him. After waiting ſome time at the door of his apartment, " it was opened by Tom himſelf half dreſſed, and ſcarcely half awake; my pre- " ſence certainly did ſurprize him; but there was an embarraſſment in his man- " ner, very ill concealed by his conſtrained affectation of joy: however, I in- " terrupted his enquiries and apologies, with a requeſt that he would haſten " breakfaſt, as my walk had given me an appetite; and while he retired for that " purpoſe, I had recourſe to a book which lay open on the table—But how " was I ſhocked, Sir, to find it filled with the groſſeſt indecencies! In a tranſport " of indignation, I flung it on the fire, and was haſtening to ſeek my ſon, and " pour out my feelings to him, when the door of his bed chamber was violently " ſlapped in my face, and bolted within—judge, Sir, of the ſtate of my mind " at that moment: But I was not long at a loſs to diſcover the ſecret of this " ſtrange indignity; on looking round, I obſerved ſcattered about the room " ſome articles of female attire, which I had not noticed before; in a corner " ſtood ſome empty bottles; glaſſes and decanters were ranged on a ſide-table, " and on a ſlip of paper ſtuck in a bracket, I read 'Enſign —— to Val. Vintage ' and Co. Dr. to Two Dozen of Madeira, 4l. 11s. —': on a ſecond glance, I " diſcovered, amongſt the litter of the room, a pair of dice boxes, ſome Apothe- " caries phials, a caſe of piſtols, and the remains of a Flapper which appeared to " have been employed by the curling irons of the hair-dreſſer.—In the utmoſt " agitation and anguiſh of ſoul, I ſeized my cane, and quitted the place without " further parley, and half reſolved never to ſee my ſon again. But, Sir, as I " became more able to reflect coolly on his ſituation, his miſconduct ſunk in my " eyes, before the magnitude of my own folly. I cannot blame myſelf too much " for ever conſenting to expoſe him, raw and inexperienced as he was, to the " powerful temptations of a military life. Had he been born in a higher rank, " and educated among youths of more elevated pretenſions, he might perhaps " have been enabled to eſcape the danger; and from having early witneſſed the " effects of faſhionable vice and folly in others, he might have been taught to " deſpiſe and deteſt them—but to hazard him, without caution, without controul, " at the very criſis of life when the advance of reaſon is outſtript by the growth " of the paſſions, from regularity of living and decent example, to diſſipated " and licentious ſociety—can I wonder that he tottered when that which ought " to have ſupported him was removed, and fell into the pit, to which I myſelf " precipitated him?

" My ſon is, I know, acquainted with your paper, Mr. Flapper; he is afraid " to ſee me, and I neither know how to write to him, or to entruſt to any third " perſon a commiſſion of ſo delicate a nature: if you favour this with publica- " tion, it may perhaps reach his eye, and I wiſh to aſſure him that he need not " any longer dread my preſence; I wiſh to exchange forgiveneſs with him; and " to ſnatch him from thoſe perils, into which my inconſiderateneſs, as much as " his inexperience, has unhappily plunged him.

" I am Sir,

" With great reſpect, your hearty well-wiſher,

A. M. T."

DUBLIN:

Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.

[Price, Two Pence.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER XI.

TUESDAY, MARCH 8, 1796.

Hodie SABBATA—
Nulla mihi—
Relligio eſt. At mî, ſum paulo infirmior, unus
Multorum.

HORACE.

TO THE FLAPPER.

'SIR,

'THE encouragement you have given to correſpondents, and the intention you have expreſſed of making your eſſays the vehicles of moral as well as literary information, induce me to offer you a few obſervations on a ſubject, which though treated of by one or more of your predeceſſors, may poſſibly be placed in certain points of view, in which your readers have not yet conſidered it.

'When I mention the ſubject, let there not, I entreat, be any alarm.—It is certainly neither more nor leſs than the obſervance of Sunday; but I aſſure you, I have no intention of urging it in the ſtile of a *Puritan* or a *Methodiſt*. I feel in the fulleſt manner that I am writing a letter to the Flapper—not compoſing a diſcourſe for the pulpit.—Inſtead, therefore, of applying myſelf merely to the religious fears or feelings of your readers, I ſhall rather lay before them ſuch conſiderations as may be ſupported on the obvious grounds of common ſenſe.

'And, in the firſt place, let me ſtate the reaſon why I take up this topick at this time particularly. It is ſimply, becauſe I conceive that if any arguments can be offered in favour of this ancient cuſtom, or if it be poſſible to ſhew cauſe why it ſhould not be wholly and finally aboliſhed, it muſt be done forthwith or not at all.—The practice is palpably and progreſſively declining. Since the commencement of the laſt year, we may perceive encroachments which did not appear in the year immediately preceding, and it requires but little ſagacity to foreſee that the preſent year will not relinquiſh an atom of its innovating claims. If then, it be not a matter of inconteſtable propriety, that the obſervance of *Sunday* ſhould take its flight into the land where all things are forgotten, there is certainly no time to be loſt; this is the moment for enquiring into the merits of the queſtion, or the ſeaſon for ſettling it on the grounds of right will moſt probably be gone for ever.

The cuſtom may yet be retained, ſhould it appear on examination that it ought to be retained; but let it once paſs away, and aſſuredly it will be too late to recal it.

'I conceive then that the obſervance of one day in ſeven, in ſuch a manner as ſenſibly to diſtinguiſh it from all the other days of the week, would be of infinite uſe, were it only for the purpoſe of breaking the monotonous uniformity of time. Nothing is more eſſential to human happineſs than variety. We feel a diſguſt for unvarying ſameneſs in all matters whether great or ſmall. In journeying we are always ſenſible of the greateſt degree of fatigue, while we are travelling along roads, not diverſified by any change of objects; and we never fail to experience renewed pleaſure, when on emerging from the drearineſs of a vaſt common, we get once more amongſt trees and hedge-rows and plantations. We even travel with additional ſatisfaction where the miles are marked on a road; and who has not felt that the ſight of a new mileſtone is always the ſource of real, however ſhort lived gratification?

'And is not variety juſt as neceſſary in paſſing along the road of life? The Great Creator ſeems to have judged ſo, and to have provided for this very exigence of human nature, in the viciſſitudes of ſeaſons, and in the ever varying revolutions of the Heavenly bodies. But experience has proved that theſe grand diviſions of time are not ſufficient to exclude wearineſs. It is too far to look forward from ſeaſon to ſeaſon without any intermediate reſting place. The tired thought demands ſome hoſpitable ſpot where it may repoſe by the way. For this purpoſe then what more appoſite expedient could have been deviſed than ſome ſuch inſtitution as that of Sunday? It divides time into parcels not too large for the imagination, without any painful effort, to meaſure and embrace beforehand; and yet not too ſmall for the execution of a premeditated plan of buſineſs. Nor does it merely mark the end of one portion and the commencement of another—but it makes the tranſition be felt by a clearly limited pauſe, which combines the relief of contraſt with the convenience of diſtinction.

'To evince the juſtneſs of this obſervation I need not have recourſe to argument. It will be ſufficient to appeal to the experience of thoſe who have not yet wholly yielded to the encroachments of modern licentiouſneſs. Let any perſon who ſtill obſerves Sunday with ever ſo ſlight expreſſions of ſolemnity, declare, whether he does not find a real advantage in thus, as it were, travelling through life by eaſy ſtages—whether he does not perceive the action of forethought leſs entangled and more invigorated, from having a ſort of limit oppoſed to its indefinite excurſiveneſs by the end of the current week—whether he does not feel thoſe ſenſations of irkſomeneſs, which are ſo apt to ſteal upon the mind, frequently repreſſed, and the chearfulneſs of hope excited, by the thought that the new week will bring along with it ſome new object of purſuit, or ſome new means of pleaſure, and whether on the return of Monday morning he does not generally remark in himſelf a ſort of renewed alertneſs of ſpirits which ſcarcely occurs on any other occaſion.

'It would be ſtill more ſuperfluous to dwell upon the beneficial effects of Sunday to the working claſſes in particular. Every man muſt be ſenſible that the diligent labourer and induſtrious mechanick could not poſſibly go through the duties of their ſtation with the ſame alacrity, if they ſtill ſaw before them a long, unbroken ſeries of toilſome exertion ſtretching onward without intermiſſion to the very limit of exiſtence. None will heſitate to grant that they muſt derive ſubſtantial relief from always being able to look forward to an approaching

proaching interval, in which they ſhall have full repoſe from their labours, ſhall enjoy their morning reſt undiſturbed, and for one entire day ſhall be completely their own maſters. Nor can it be doubted, but that after this reſpite, they return to their employments with increaſed vigour of body and mind, finding action in ſome degree a relief from abſolute eaſe, as they had the day before found inaction a relief from the fatigues of the week.

'But in order to do full juſtice to this wiſe and liberal inſtitution, we muſt conſider it in a ſtill higher point of view, as a ſeaſon dedicated to the honour of the Supreme being, and more peculiarly ſet apart for his worſhip. I take for granted few of my readers will heſitate to admit the infinite importance of religious principles both to individual and ſocial man. But if religion be of importance, then the beneficial influence of Sunday riſes above all calculation. For what is it that, juſt now, keeps up amongſt the multitude the recollection of religious obligation? Is it early inſtruction? I fear this occurs comparatively in few caſes. Is it the public celebration of Divine ſervice?—Alas! this can have but a limited operation, for how many are there who perhaps from month to month never once attend it. What then is it? Doubtleſs it is the publick obſervance of Sunday. It is this unfailing monitor, which in ſpite of negligence, in ſpite of profaneneſs, delivers, by its very ſilence, a weekly lecture to the whole community, and forces thoſe who will hear no other inſtructor, to remember ſtill, that they are immortal and accountable beings. Were this once aboliſhed, would not a great part of the inhabitants of this country be apt to forget in a ſhort time, even that there was a God? But as an elegant writer expreſſes it "Sunday is in ſome ſort the *palladium* of religion, "and ſo long as it is retained, it is impoſſible that the city of our God ſhould "be overcome."

'If, then, the obſervance of Sunday be ſo evidently connected with the exiſtence of religion, and if the influence of religion be the very cement and ſolder of civilized ſociety, ought not thoſe who above all others, are intereſted in the ſecurity of the ſocial band, I mean perſons of rank and opulence, to be very careful leſt by their own palpable diſregard of this venerable cuſtom, they teach leſſons to the maſs, from which they themſelves will be the firſt to ſuffer the moſt diſmal conſequences. The toe of the peaſant, it has been ſaid, treadeth on the courtier's heel, and where will this be ſo aſſuredly verified as in the ſteep deſcent of practical irreligion?

'But let it not be thought that I would urge the obſervance of Sunday on the higher claſſes, merely on the ground of political prudence. There are motives of infinitely greater force which apply as fully to them as to the meaneſt in the community. If the inſtitution of Sunday be uſeful to preclude the irkſomeneſs of uniformity, to whom can it be ſo neceſſary as to thoſe whoſe only buſineſs is the purſuit of pleaſure, and who have already carried on that purſuit even to ſatiety? Are not ſuch perſons conſcious, nay, do not their very looks and manners too generally prove, that after all their laborious contrivances, the current of their delights is nearly ſtagnant? What expedient, then, could they ſo wiſely adopt, as that of ſeaſonable interruptions? In this view would it not be worth the while even of a ſyſtematick voluptuary, to check the ſtream of pleaſure for one day in ſeven, that it might flow with accelerated briſkneſs during the remaining ſix?

'But have the ſons and daughters of gaiety no perſonal concern in Sunday as a *religious* inſtitution? Are they ſure that a ſeaſon can never arrive in which even they may be ſolicitous for the ſupports of chriſtian piety?

Would

Would it be wiſe in them then, to deſtroy every means of intercourſe between themſelves and that laſt refuge from deſpair,—to retain, not even a ſingle plank, on which they might ſtill eſcape to a comfortable harbour, even amid the wreck of all earthly felicity? It is no leſs true of habits than of friends, that when they have been once abandoned wholly it is always difficult and not ſeldom impoſſible to retrieve them. But if any degree of connexion be preſerved, even that remnant may ſtill be improved to a renewal of intimacy.

'But my limits will only permit me to conclude with the following paſſage from a celebrated writer, which is at once ſo pertinent and ſo beautiful, that were I to withhold it, I ſhould do equal injuſtice to my readers and to my ſubject.

"To the great" ſaith Mr. Burke "the conſolations of religion are as ne- "ceſſary as its inſtructions. They too are among the unhappy. They "feel perſonal pain and domeſtic ſorrow. In theſe they have no privilege, "but are ſubject to pay their full contingent to the contributions levied "on mortality. They want this ſovereign balm under their gnawing cares "and anxieties, which, being leſs converſant about the limited wants of "animal life, range without limit, and are diverſified by infinite combinations in "the wild and unbounded regions of imagination. Some charitable dole is "wanting to theſe, our often very unhappy brethren, to fill the gloomy void "that reigns in minds which have nothing on earth to hope or fear; ſome- "thing to relieve the killing languor and over-laboured laſſitude of thoſe who "have nothing to do; ſomething to excite an appetite to exiſtence in the palled "ſatiety which attends on all pleaſures which may be bought, where nature is not "left to her own proceſs, where even deſire is anticipated, and therefore frui- "tion defeated by meditated ſchemes and contrivances of delight; and no inter- "val, no obſtacle, is interpoſed between the wiſh and the accompliſhment."

AMICUS.'

DUBLIN:

Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.

[Price, Two Pence.]

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The Flapper.

NUMBER XII.

SATURDAY, MARCH 12, 1796.

Mire novus expulit alter.

HORACE.

Lo prejudice ſtill prejudice expel,
As guinea juſtles guinea from the ſcale.

IT is unfortunate that nothing ſo completely eradicates an ancient prejudice as a new one. I ſay unfortunate, becauſe this latter grows up and flouriſhes in place of that which it has overthrown; ſo that if prejudice be pernicious in proportion to its ſtrength, we may have cauſe to lament the removal of a former, on the ſcore of vigour to be inferred in the ſucceſſor that depoſed it.

I have known a prejudice of long date become a very "*meek uſurper*" on that underſtanding, which at firſt it had ſubdued. And this I take to be uſually the caſe. The enthuſiaſm which enhanced its firſt authority is gone; and inſtead of commanding arbitrarily, it may grow to be little more than an inſtrument in the hands of reaſon; gaining over the paſſions to her ſide; prompting her concluſions, and enforcing her decrees.

Even where its operations are leſs ſalutary, I muſt ſtill prefer the prejudice which age has weakened, to the ſtrenuous and freſh one that arrives in its ſtead; and cite to myſelf the authority of the Fox in the fable, who would not remove the hornets that had been tormenting him, leſt others, more greedy, ſhould ſupply their room.

I am not a favourer of prejudice, in the abſtract. For, without entangling myſelf in the enquiry, whether a certain degree of it may not be uſeful, I think there is no danger but that a ſufficient portion would remain, in ſpite of our moſt ſtudious endeavours to remove it. We might try to baniſh, but we ſhould be only able to controul; inaſmuch as there muſt be prejudice, wherever there is paſſion. I therefore ſhould not ſcruple ſoberly to attempt its cure; but ſhould heſitate, indeed, to conſider this as effected, when I had merely ſubſtituted one prepoſſeſſion for another.

Weak and ſilly minds have a ſort of craving for ſtimulatives; and as ſoon as they find the prejudice which ſufficed to ſtir their anceſtors, abated of its ardour, and to have loſt the attractions of novelty, they cry it down, in order to invent a motive, not more rational but ſtronger, for themſelves, and which their vanity too may cheriſh, as being partly its own creation. Hence it is, that prejudices, while they are really very miſchievous and oppreſſive, hold their place againſt all oppoſition which good ſenſe can give; but as ſoon as they are mellowed by age, and have become harmleſs, if not uſeful, the fickle vulgar (of all ranks) begin to exclaim, retailing every thing that, while thoſe errors were pernicious, wiſe men had to no purpoſe urged againſt them, together with all the amplifications in which ſatire, then diſregarded, had indulged; but which now, when they are more exaggerated reſemblances than they had been, are held up to view as ſtrict unimpaſſioned truths. Hence it is that philoſophy, aware from whence this treacherous outcry ſprings, and that the ſubverſion of the ancient prejudice will be followed by the more active domination of a new one, raiſes its voice againſt the innovators; and, by a ſtrange fatality, becomes the ſeeming advocate of rooted error. Hence too thoſe ſudden tranſitions which we ſee, not only from one extreme to another; but (which is worſe) from a rigour of opinion that, exiſting only in theory, was much qualified in practice, to one which, in the midſt of ſpecious diſcourſes on liberality, is often practically and ſeverely felt.

If it were reaſon, and not caprice, which removed a prejudice, the reformers would not "*miſtake reverſe of wrong for right*," and ruſh at once to the oppoſite exceſs of error; nor ſhould we have ſo much ground, as there is at preſent, for concluding that the danger which is generally pointed out—has ceaſed; and, for inſtance, that if the faſhionable cry be againſt tyranny and ſuperſtition, theſe abuſes in fact are in the wane, and the prejudices of the day more allied to infidelity and inſurrection.

It is here ſcarcely a digreſſion to obſerve, that though the writer may ſometimes ſo mark the nature of his ſubject as to render the cenſure as tranſient as the fault; yet ſometimes ſatire has ſurvived its object, and by a ſtrange perverſion of its original deſign, has, after an interval of neglect, been brought forward to countenance the vices oppoſite to thoſe, which it was written to ſtigmatize.

While the deformity was flouriſhing, which the ſatyriſt endeavoured to repreſent in diſguſting colours; no man forſooth! could diſcover the reſemblance: the depravity which was in vogue could not be hideous. But the caſe is otherwiſe, when the influence of faſhion is at an end.

"*Dum jacet in ripâ, calcemus Cæſaris hoſtem.*"

When the original has grown obſolete, and a contrary vice is become the favourite of the day, the portrait of paſt error is brought to light; and beneath the expreſſions of abhorrence with which this is overwhelmed, the progreſs of its ſucceſſor is artfully concealed.

He

He who really gets rid of prejudice, and does not merely ſubſtitute a new one for the old—does it for the moſt part, ſilently and by degrees. It diminiſhes inſenſibly, as the mind becomes enlightened; as obſervation, knowledge, and intercourſe encreaſe; until at length, if any trace be left behind, at leaſt no miſchievous degree of it remains: juſt enough, perhaps, to account for the indulgence which the truly wiſe man ſhews to the errors that he has eſcaped.

But the reformer who only quells one error by another, inadvertently diſcovers the new ſervitude which degrades him, by a bigoted intolerance towards all adherents of the prejudice which he has forſaken.

What greater ſlaves to prejudices than that empty tribe—who yet aſſerted their independence in their title of "*Free Thinkers*," and proclaimed open war againſt the alledged tyranny of prejudice?

I have generally found *vanity* to be a mighty reformer: at leaſt I have commonly traced ſymptoms of this weakneſs in the moſt active cavillers at prejudice. It may (ſurely) be diſcerned in ſome modern writers amongſt the French; and perhaps might not evade a ſearch through the memoirs, lately publiſhed, of Madame Roland and Louvet. The ſame frailty has been imputed to that famous enemy of prejudice, Rouſſeau. I ſhall not ſay—unjuſtly; though I might heſitate to give ſo harſh a name as vanity to that conſolatory ſelf diſplay, and contemplation of its own merits, to which a generous and ſuſceptible mind, when injured by the world's opinion, may have recourſe, rather than to the malignant comforts of revenge. To expect that in affliction men ſhould not dwell upon themſelves, (and what the man feels, the author will reveal,) is unnatural; and an error which almoſt any good tragedy could remove;—and to blame the indulgence of that complacency which a ſenſe of ill-requited worth excites, (and which is not incompatible with great modeſty in common circumſtances,) is dangerouſly to invade the privileges and controul of conſcience.

Vanity can endure no prejudices but its own. It not only ſcorns ſubſcribing to mere authority; but will ſcarcely admit known truth, if it comes ſanctioned by opinion. How unlike the modeſty of ſo enlightened a man as Livy! who, on the ground of deference for opinions which his wiſe anceſtors had entertained, juſtifies the introduction of prodigies amongſt his annals: "Mihi, vetuſtas res ſcribenti, neſcio quo pacto, antiquus fit animus; "& *quædam religio tenet*, quæ illi prudentiſſimi viri publicè ſuſcipienda cenſue-"rint, ea pro dignis habere, quæ in meos annales referam*."

Perhaps it may be proper for me, in a future paper, to take a different (yet conſiſtent) view of the preſent ſubject; leſt I ſhould ſeem to be more the advocate of prejudice than I am.

Prejudice may be on the ſide of truth—or falſehood—or may embrace a judgment which partakes of both. In the ſecond caſe it is undoubtedly an evil;

* *Lib.* 43. *c.* 13.

evil; and dangerous in proportion to the importance of the falſehood which it maintains. In the third inſtance, the good or ill tendency of the prejudice will depend on the predominance of truth, or falſehood, in the opinion which it inculcates.

But when prejudice enrols itſelf on the ſide of truth, does it not furniſh the wiſe with more zeal than cold reaſoning could beſtow, and with a ſteadineſs which precludes inconſtancy, and ſcepticiſm? and does it not ſupply the vulgar with a diſpenſation from thoſe enquiries, which they want leiſure, and perhaps capacity, to undertake?

Without doubt, the exertions of ſuperior minds have been known ſuddenly to overturn long rooted prejudice, to the evident advantage of mankind; nor do my counſels aim at checking (if they could) that energy of genius which is fitted to diſperſe the errors that ſurround it: my advice is addreſſed to perſons of conſummate talents, but of moderate underſtanding. To theſe I ſhould recommend—ſoberly to counteract prejudice, by acquiring knowledge, and to ſhun the vanity, which, pretending to correct the miſtakes of habit, might aboliſh uſeful truths, or, at leaſt, exchange ancient errors for its own.

Such a *ſubſtitution* is not to be deſired; for few things improve more than prejudice by age. As the Lava, which, when iſſuing firſt from a volcano, brings deſolation where-ever it appears, but in time is found to ripen to a ſoil, which contains the principles of fertility, and admits of cultivation.

P.

D U B L I N:

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The Flapper.

NUMBER XIII.

TUESDAY, MARCH 15, 1796.

Contemptor Divum Mezentius.

VIRGIL.

—— Of God, or Hell, or worſe,
He reck'd not.—

MILTON.

I HAVE long obſerved the growth of infidelity with an attentive eye, and have found in it much matter of curious ſpeculation. But after the various views of it I have taken, there is no circumſtance which I have more frequent occaſion to remark, than the ſtriking differences between the infidels of the preſent day and thoſe who lived and wrote in the beginning of this century. Theſe were in general a race of learned and thoughtful men, philoſophic reaſoners, or at leaſt aſſuming the ſemblance of reaſoning and philoſophy; who marſhalled a regular hoſt of arguments againſt the doctrines or facts of the chriſtian religion. Many of them had the credit of being fair and open enemies; they came to cloſe encounter with the advocates of revelation, and therefore afforded an opportunity of determinate reſiſtance. They were reſiſted, and they were foil'd;—foil'd at their own weapons; and ſo completely indeed beaten out of the field of argument, that they have never ſince been willing to renew the combat. It was a glorious victory over not a diſhonourable foe.

But in place of thoſe thinking infidels, a new ſpecies of unbelievers have taken the field;—if this expreſſion can properly be applied to men who wage a kind of *Indian* war, in deſultory ſkirmiſhes, and take care to avoid any regular engagement. Theſe fight with other arms than the former;—more deſpicable, but perhaps more dangerous too. Almoſt without pretenſions to reaſoning, they yet have wiſdom enough to profit by the experience of their predeceſſors; and lay aſide the uſe of a weapon which they find can be employed

againſt them with ſucceſs. Strangers to the refinement of a Shafteſbury, they have ſomewhere heard of his tenet, that "*ridicule* is the teſt of truth;"—they proceed to attack chriſtianity with the ſcoff of impudence; and boaſt of victory when they can raiſe a laugh. Upon them the force of argument is loſt, for they cannot feel it. Confident becauſe uninformed; without information becauſe impatient of enquiry; and rejecting enquiry, becauſe they fear the reſult of it would prove unfavourable to the principles they are reſolved to maintain;—a man of ſenſe and modeſty and knowledge is ſcarcely qualified to oppoſe them, and a Herbert and a Hobbes would bluſh to own their alliance. Strength is oppoſed in vain to the inſect that has induſtry to moleſt your quiet, and agility to eſcape your graſp.

But it unfortunately happens that this race of *petit maître* infidels, who miſtake wit for argument and profaneneſs for wit, are not ſo wholly contemptible as to be harmleſs: nay, the miſchief they do in ſociety is greater and more extenſive, than all which thoſe former *Goliahs* of deiſm could produce. It required time and thought to load and diſcharge the pieces of *heavy artillery*, with which the latter aſſaulted the fabric of chriſtianity: few comparatively heard their report, and moſt of thoſe who heard it perceived that the edifice was proof againſt their force. But our modern free-thinkers find neither thought nor time neceſſary to prepare the *pop-guns*, from which they ſhoot their pellets of ſarcaſm and ſneer: theſe fly thick in every company; and unluckily numbers can be entertained by a joke, who have not ſenſe to comprehend a demonſtration, nor patience to inveſtigate a truth.

Now if we conſider that chriſtianity will always find a foe in human corruption; and that thoſe whoſe hearts and lives are ſuch as make them wiſh to throw off its reſtraints, will be indiſpoſed to think that true which they find it their intereſt ſhould be falſe; we need not wonder that our ſcoffing infidels are ſo ſucceſsful in the work of making proſelytes.

Some, however, may be teized with their impertinence, who would wiſh for ſome *flapper* to drive them away; and I would therefore offer one, which I think abundantly ſufficient, and have ſometimes uſed with ſucceſs, when they have come within my reach. I never attempt to defend the Goſpel againſt their attacks,—it would exalt them to a ſignificance of which they are unworthy;—I meet them on this ground: they attack it in a manner inconſiſtent either with *honeſty* or *ſenſe*. An honeſt and wiſe infidel (if ſuch there be) muſt treat the ſubject with ſerioufneſs and reſpect; for, on whichever ſide the truth may lie, it is a ſubject confeſſedly of the laſt importance. The man that jeſts on ſuch a queſtion, proves himſelf in that very act either a *fool* or *knave*. This rule holds good in many matters even of temporal conſequence; but acquires multiplied force in things that relate to God and to Eternity. If a man decide here, without ſober and diligent ex mina ion,—he is at beſt a *madman:* and if he endeavour to influence the judgment of others as lightly as he has formed his own,—he is the worſt of *villains*. It would be well if ſome of our *talkers* againſt revelation would

beſtow

beſtow a moment's conſideration on the enquiry, how they can vindicate themſelves againſt one or both of theſe charges. Perhaps they will find no way left for this, except the bold avowal of atheiſm. Nor will even that anſwer their purpoſe, unleſs they can produce infallible *demonſtration* for the truth of atheiſtic opinions: for the very *poſſibility* that there is a God, would be enough with every rational mind to demand reverential awe.

I have often contemplated *Balbus* with mingled pity and indignation. His talents are far from contemptible, though rather brilliant than ſolid. His information upon the topics of general converſation is conſiderable, though not ſo deep as ſhewy. *Balbus* might have been a uſeful and reſpectable member of ſociety, were he not intolerably vain and ſelf-ſufficient. To the ruling paſſion of being admired as a man of wit and ſpirit, he has ſacrificed his talents, his conſcience, his uſefulneſs, and reſpectability. He ſet out in life tinctured with ſome principles of religion; but ſoon found that theſe prevented his ſhining in the way that he deſired. He diſcovered that infidelity was faſhionable, and reſolved to be an infidel. He picked up ſome ſcattered gleanings of ſtale objections from deiſtical writers; but ſought not after their anſwers,—for truth was not his object. On this ſtock he has opened a ware-houſe of profaneneſs; and in all companies retails his doughty ſcepticiſm, interlarded with oaths, and embelliſhed with obſcenity. He raiſes a laugh at the expence of every thing ſacred, and is ſatisfied; and ſupplies with vociferation and effrontery, what he wants in wit and argument.

I met him once in a coffee-houſe, and heard him as uſual the loudeſt of the company. He harangued on prieſtcraft and ſuperſtition; and ſcattered his jokes from Geneſis to the Apocalypſe, with a volubility that ſeemed to be encreaſed by his perceiving a clergyman in the room. *Ariſto* ſat oppoſite to him, a grave middle-aged man, with a penetrating eye, which he kept intently fixed upon *Balbus*. At length, after liſtening to him with ſilent patience, he withdrew; and *Balbus* in a few minutes received the following billet:

" SIR,

" I HAVE heard you talk bravely and ſo as to excite, I dare ſay, your " own admiration, but (I am ſure) a very different ſentiment in my breaſt. " Your language has been calculated to inſult the underſtanding and conſcience " of thoſe who heard you; and to wound the feelings of a man, whoſe pro- " feſſion you knew, would ſcreen you from the correction you deſerve. You " muſt thank yourſelf if my reproof be not the moſt courteous. You are a " young man, and very vain; but, what is worſe, you are very wicked alſo. The " ſneers you have been throwing out againſt revelation are unworthy of the " name of arguments: they only expoſe your ignorance of the ſubject, and " (what generally accompanies ignorance in a conceited man) your impudence. " Your profaneneſs and open contempt of natural as well as revealed religion, " render you no very reſpectable aſſociate to the corps of infidels, nor a very

" formidable

" formidable opponent to chriſtianity. You may bluſter, and you may laugh, " on receiving this reprehenſion; but I am as much above being intimidated " by the one, as I am above being made aſhamed by the other. If you think " it ridiculous that a man ſhould believe there is a God, and deſire to " act in conformity to that belief; I ſhall think your ridicule my glory. I fear " not to avow myſelf a chriſtian, upon principle, and after examination. " You are an infidel without *examination*, and therefore without *principle*. If " *you* believe there is a God, you ſhould learn to ſpeak of things ſacred with " reverence: and even if you diſbelieve it, common modeſty ſhould pre- " vent your chooſing for the but of your puny jeſts, a religion which reckons " among its ſupporters a Boyle, a Newton, and a Locke.

" I am, Sir,

" Your's, &c.

" ARISTO."

Balbus's face coloured while he read Ariſto's letter: he muttered ſomething about *a damned unmannerly old prig;* but has never ſince appeared at the coffee-houſe.

R.

D U B L I N:

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[A Letter Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER XIV.

SATURDAY, MARCH 19, 1796.

Catch, ere ſhe change, the Cynthia of the Minute.

POPE.

"MR. FLAPPER,

"THOUGH I am ſomewhat of opinion that your ſpeculations are of "too grave a caſt for this diſſipated age and country, yet I do not de- "ſign at preſent to attempt leading you into gayer paths. But as I would "not wiſh to alarm your readers, I announce to them that it is not my in- "tention by any means to preach a ſermon, though I cannot deny I am go- "ing to propoſe having one preached. Liberality to ſuch as are in want is a "great virtue, and to clothe the naked a chief branch of it. Now I obſerve "in the aſſemblies of this town, that many of our fine ladies are literally "half naked. Their backs indeed are well covered, but as to their fronts, "neither decency, elegance, nor ſafety, can juſtify the expoſures that take "place there. This, Mr. Flapper, I attribute altogether to the diſtreſs of "the times. They keep their money, either to buy bread for themſelves, "or for the ſtarving manufacturers in the Liberty. It occurs indeed to "ſome, that they have joined the general cry of the age for reform, and "are preparing, by gradual advances, to return to the primitive ſtate of in- "nocence, ſuch as it was before aprons were invented. Now, Sir, I may "without vanity, I think, pretend to have ſome little knowledge in human "nature, and I am ſatisfied it would be eaſier to teach the ſun and moon to "dance a pas de deux, or the planets to play at caſino, than to induce the "beaux and belles of theſe days to take even a ſingle ſtep towards the regi- "ons of paradiſiacal innocence.

" Depend upon it, Sir, my fair countrywomen have no ſuch wild and fooliſh " projects.—No, Sir, it is plain that the cauſe of their preſent denudation is " neither more nor leſs than their poverty, or their alms-giving. I would " therefore, humbly propoſe that a ſermon be preached, a collection made, " and a committee appointed, to purchaſe kerchiefs, tuckers, modeſty and " elbow-pieces for the half-naked beauty and faſhion of our land.

" For the nudity of the elbows, indeed, other motives, beſides œconomy, " have been aſſigned. Some ſay, that certain fair ones, who conſidered their " round, ſmooth, egglike elbows as a beauty, introduced the practiſe. But, " Mr. Flapper, are others to whom various nature has not been ſo bounteous, " in imitation of their example to make a diſplay of deformities? Others " again, obſerving the extreme ſharpneſs of many elbows ſo expoſed, will " have it that they are left naked (like ſwords unſcabbarded) in order, with " cobler-like movement, to make room in a crowd.

" But, in truth, my own private opinion is, as I ſaid before, that all their " nakedneſs proceeds from the preſent ſcarcity of proviſions. I therefore " flatter myſelf this hint will be improved upon, and the ſermon immediately " adverti ſed. I dare ſay ſome of our young divines will diſplay much elo- " quence on the occaſion. The denudated boſom of a fair damſel expoſed to " all the inclemency of theſe harſh ſpring winds, to the rude kiſs of Boreas, " and the ruder eyes of footmen, chairmen, and porters, would be a topic " of oratory, which, properly managed, could not fail to ſoften the hardeſt " heart, and open the cloſeſt purſe. I aſſure you, Sir, my own compaſſion is " often ſo excited by the ſad ſights of this kind I ſee, that it is with difficulty " I refrain from covering them with my handkerchief, or even ſpreading my " expanded hands over ſuch, as from their youth, muſt be more ſenſible to " the impreſſions of the air. The collectors at the ſermon ſhould be all fe- " males of different ages and deſcription, and dreſſed—or rather undreſſed— " in the higheſt ſtile of faſhionable nakedneſs. I would alſo adviſe that they " be all pin-elbowed, both becauſe it muſt move every heart to ſee them com- " pelled by hard neceſſity to expoſe ſuch deformities, and becauſe a clever " female, if ſhe ſaw occaſion, might, at a ſhort turn, give a daſh of that for- " midable weapon to a ſtingy contributor.

" I am, Sir, with much eſteem,

" Your frequent Reader, and humble Servant,

" ANTHONY ANTINUDE.

" P. S. An ingenious artiſt of this town, I hear, has invented a mode of " correcting defects in the elbow points. By a ſlight inciſion he gets at the bone,

" and

" and then by ſawing, raſping, filing, and ſome other little ſurgical operations, " rounds off, according to an approved model, the points of ſuch as are too " ſharp. In ſome untoward caſes, he introduces artificial knobs, which the " niceſt eye cannot diſtinguiſh from the natural. I congratulate my fair coun- " trywomen on the ſucceſsful exertions of this young man, for the embelliſh- " ment of the ſex, and the honour of the kingdom."

TO THE FLAPPER.

" SIR,

" I AM a player of ſome years ſtanding in the Theatre, and have met with " conſiderable applauſe—particularly in the tragic department. I have had the " honour of filling the characters of Emperors, Sultans, Heroes and Stateſ- " men innumerable, but that of a Lover was my forte, and one of my ten- " der ſpeeches, aided by vehemence of emphaſis and clenched knuckles, never " failed to gain the meed of a thundering plaudit—Pit, Box, and Gallery, " igad, as my friend Bayes phraſes it. After attaining to eminence ſuch as " this, who could imagine that an unforeſeen contingency ſhould expoſe me " to the deriſion of the audience, and the cenſure of cynical animadverſion ? " But in an evil hour I undertook the part of Alonzo in the Revenge, and ſo " taken up was I in managing my enunciation in my fine ſpeeches to Leonora, " that I never once perceived ſhe was arrayed in conformity to the prevailing " ſhort-waiſted Mania: I therefore as uſual exclaimed,

> ' Who turn'd that ſlender waiſt with ſo much art
> ' And ſhut perfection in ſo ſmall a ring.'

" The whole houſe burſt into a roar of laughter ; and truly no wonder, " for the ring which would have ſhut in fair Leonora muſt have been at leaſt " an ell round about.

" Mr. Flapper, you muſt be ſenſible that in very ſerious matters the unex- " pected introduction of a ludicrous circumſtance puts gravity to flight. " What occurred in this inſtance threw the audience into ſuch a merry mood, " that the remainder of my performance moved nothing but riſibility.—But the " affair did not end here. The *ſmall* critics (who treat us players like *Feræ* " *Naturæ)* have got hold of the incident, and maul me, ſans mercy, for my " ſtupidity in not having either adapted the compliment to the preſent faſhion, " or elſe entirely omitted it. Now, Sir, you will eaſily ſee the impoſſibility

" of

" of my having altered the paſſage to any thing tolerable—indeed the at-
" tempting to compliment a lady on her ſhape now-a-days would be a covert
" inſult:—'praiſe undeſerved is ſatire in diſguiſe.' But had not this been the fact
" I doubt the title of any player whatſoever to alter the dramatiſt's work.—
" Bards have a poetical licenſe—however they came by it—but actors, ſince
" the good time they have been trundled in the cart of Theſpis, have not.
" Shakeſpeare's precept is text and margent in ſuch caſes, and you may recol-
" lect he ſays 'your clowns ſhall not ſpeak more than what is ſet down for
" them.' As for the omiſſion of paſſages, 'tis true many modern Tragedies
" would not be a whit the worſe for having their works pruned and weeded—
" but ſuch attempts have often occaſioned ſad bungling work on the ſtage,
" and put us all out by ſpoiling our cues; ſo any thing in that way was not
" to be effected without a previous arrangement. Beſides, if the declamation
" on Leonora's beauty was left out of the ſcene in queſtion, there would be
" little or nothing in it.—Thus circumſtanced, as I am wholly diſqualified for
" rectifying the matter, I beg you will order the beauteous Leonora to reſume
" her whalebone bodice; and lace as tight as the poet evidently intended ſhe
" ſhould do.

" Thine,

" ROSCIUS."

G. Z.

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The Flapper.

NUMBER XV.

TUESDAY, MARCH 22, 1796.

——— *Oblivia vitæ.*

HOR.

I AM much more diſpoſed to attribute the faults which I ſee committed in the world to weakneſs than to depravity. Few comparatively are vicious of ſet purpoſe. The great majority of thoſe who are chargeable with improper conduct have contracted their pernicious habits chiefly from a want of attention and recollection. They tranſgreſſed in the firſt inſtance becauſe they acted without conſideration; they continue the practice becauſe they do not reflect on its conſequences. If they could only be brought to a ſtate of habitual preſence of mind, their reformation would in moſt inſtances be certain.

I indulge myſelf in this opinion, not only from a principle of chriſtian charity, but alſo becauſe it is chiefly on ſuch a ſuppoſition that I can hope to be ſucceſsful in my preſent undertaking. The application of my Flappers, like gentle alteratives in medicine, may be efficacious, where the complaint is accidental. But where faulty habits are the reſult of innate profligacy, feeble indeed muſt be the expectation of overcoming them by reſpectful hints or mild admonitions.

But while the opinion I have mentioned encourages a hope of ſucceſs, it alſo ſuggeſts the neceſſity of every poſſible exertion to counteract the evil. If vicious habits may ariſe from mere inattention and forgetfulneſs, it follows that every man, whatever his original temper of mind may be, or whatever advantages he may have derived from education or other circumſtances, is nevertheleſs expoſed to perpetual danger; becauſe all men, at all times, are more or leſs liable to be inattentive and forgetful.

And let it be obſerved, that this tendency, ſtrong as it is by nature, muſt be materially increaſed by the faſhionable manners of the preſent day. The politeneſs of the old court, however it might have exceeded on the ſide of ceremony and punctilio, implied an attention to certain rules of behaviour; it tended of courſe to cheriſh recollection and preſence of mind, and to produce method and the exerciſe of thought even in the common actions of life. But when high breeding has gone into the very oppoſite extreme—when it is made to conſiſt in the derilection of all rule, in abſolute eaſe and careleſſneſs, and when the air and converſation of the more delicate ſex are as unreſtrained as the flowing drapery that adorns their perſons—it muſt be expected that ſimilar habits ſhould prevail in general conduct, unleſs ſome extraordinary means of prevention be reſorted to. When, therefore, parents and gouvernantes, and dancing maſters, and maſters of ceremonies are flappers no longer, a ſelf-elected Flapper may at leaſt be pardoned for his well-meant officiouſneſs.

We do not indeed learn from any authentick document that the Flappers of Laputa thought of applying their art to any moral end; and probably there was no neceſſity for their doing ſo. The inhabitants of that iſland ſeem to have been a ſtudious philoſophick people, and their fits of abſence conſequently aroſe not from faſhionable *nonchalance*, but from literary abſtraction. Inſtead therefore of talking inceſſantly, without appearing either to know, or care what they ſaid, they often ſeemed to have loſt the faculty of ſpeaking at all; inſtead of ungraciouſly elbowing all who happened to be in their way, they merely neglected to return ſalutes, or ſometimes ſtared at a familiar acquaintance, without knowing whom they looked at; and inſtead of putting the limbs and lives of their pedeſtrian neighbours into hourly jeopardy by the random rapidity of their phætons and curricles, they now and then drove their own innocent heads againſt walls and lamp-poſts. In ſhort, the difference between the caſes is ſo obvious as not to require illuſtration, and would alone juſtify the extenſion of the Flapping ſyſtem beyond its original deſign.

But the expediency of applying it to a moral purpoſe will be ſtill more evident, if we turn our attention to the common walks of life, and obſerve in a few living inſtances, the miſchiefs which daily ariſe from forgetfulneſs. How many perſons do we meet with, who, though poſſeſſed of uſeful talents and amiable tempers, from mere want of reflection are either miſapplying or neglecting the former, and are acting in direct inconſiſtency with the latter? How many good natured parents do we ſee, who forget that they have children? How many well-meaning, eaſy-tempered men could we point out who are ruining themſelves and injuring others, merely, becauſe they do not keep in conſtant recollection the real extent of their means? How many do we converſe with, who have embraced certain principles of action with great ſincerity, and maintain them with anſwerable warmth, and yet habitually forget to carry them into practice.

We have a whimſical inſtance of this inconſiſtency in the well known Mr. Teſty. No man appears more attached to the eſtabliſhed religion, or is more

zealous

zealous in its defence againſt all kinds of opponents. He laments, on all occaſions, the viſible increaſe of infidelity and profaneneſs—and often expreſſes his apprehenſions that pariſh churches will ſhortly become uſeleſs. Thoſe who know him do not wiſh to touch on theſe ſubjects in his company, as he uſually takes fire at the very mention of them. A few evenings ago as he and I were returning together from the houſe of a friend, we met with Tom Cavil. As Tom profeſſes himſelf an unbeliever, and had been juſt recruiting his ſtock of knowledge from one of Paine's pamphlets, he fell at once upon his favourite ſubject, and quoted a paſſage which he ſaid he had read that morning. It was one of thoſe trite objections which have been an hundred times offered, and as often refuted. But juſt as I was going to compliment him on the *novelty* of his remark, Mr. Teſty interrupted me with ſuch an outrageous peal of curſes "on all damned blaſphemers and infidels" that I was very glad to ſlip off, leſt the vigilant guardians of the night ſhould have ſuppoſed we were going together by the ears, and have of courſe deemed it their duty to convey us to the pariſh watch-houſe. But notwithſtanding all this great zeal for religion, it is remarkable that Mr. Teſty uniformly forgets to go to church. Nay, what is yet more extraordinary, when his friend Alderman Parmeſan, the cheeſemonger, ſtopped at his houſe the other day, to adminiſter an oath to a perſon who wanted to make an affidavit, every nook and corner was ſearched in vain for a bible, and the Alderman was on the point of making uſe of a *Comes Comercii*, for want of a more ſuitable volume, when a ſervant was found who happened to be poſſeſſed of a common prayer-book.

But of all victims of forgetfulneſs Jack Spendall is the moſt deplorable. This good-humoured fellow was born to affluence. At the age of two and twenty he married an amiable woman, and by her has had a family of fine boys, all of whom he has found means to fix in the army or navy. As his wife brought him no fortune, there was no ſettlement demanded, and his eſtate remained in his own power. Jack was always remarkable for a ſort of extemporary liberality. But his fortune would have been equal to this, if he had not contracted amongſt his father's ſervants, when a boy, a paſſion for gambling. No man could be fonder of his wife and children, or more alive for the moment to the calls of honour and juſtice. But it was Jack's misfortune that whatever he was engaged in engroſſed him wholly. At the hazard table in particular he forgot wife, children, property, and at this day he would be in a ſtate of abſolute mendicancy, if about three years ago, a judicious friend had not obliged him to barter the poor remains of his fortune for an annuity for his wife's life and his own, ſo ſettled that he cannot at any time ſpend more than the amount of one quarterly payment. I always loved the poor fellow, and I am now particularly attentive to him, becauſe I perceive that moſt of his old intimates now paſs him by, almoſt without a ſalute. A few days ſince I called at his lodging ſoon after breakfaſt.

breakfaſt. I met him juſt going out. He had received his quarterly payment the day before, and was going abroad with fifty guineas in his pocket to pay ſome ſhop accounts which had been ſent in to him during the preceding week. "I "am a happy man," ſaid he, "I owe but fifty pounds, and I have in my "purſe more than ſufficient to diſcharge it." I ſaw he ſpoke from his inmoſt ſoul—but having ſome engagements, I preſſed his hand and parted. But what have I ſince learned! Paſſing by a faſhionable rendezvous, to which a ſort of pride, almoſt as pitiable as it was blameable ſtill induced him to ſubſcribe, he met one of his quondam friends, who was induced to believe, from the eaſineſs of his air, that a renewal of acquaintance might not be unprofitable. Poor Jack never could withſtand ſolicitation, he ſat down to play—forgot his creditors, his wife and himſelf, and in one ſhort hour his fifty guineas were no more. I have not ſeen him ſince; I fear to ſee him, and ſtill more to ſee his worthy broken-hearted wife. At this moment I gladly diſmiſs my Flapper;—for I too would fain find relief in forgetfulneſs.

L.

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The Flapper.

NUMBER XVI.

SATURDAY, MARCH 26, 1796.

Οἷον ἐστι τὸ ἀνόητον ὄντως ἀπολειφθηναι διὰ τὸ μὴ νομισθηναι τοῖς ἀνοήτοις ἀνόητον.
Simplic. in Epictetum.

Strange that a man ſhall in reality become fooliſh, to avoid the imputation of folly from thoſe whom he knows to be fools.

IT is wiſely and graciouſly ordained by providence that a being whoſe nature is ſo complex as that of man ſhould find a ſuitable variety in the motives which recommend to him the performance of his duty. Thus while his underſtanding is convinced by conſiderations of fitneſs and propriety, his paſſions are influenced by reward and puniſhment: while his ſelf-love is continually ſolicited by virtue pointing out to him his true intereſt, his ſocial nature is no leſs powerfully ſtimulated by ſympathy and by ſhame.

The ſocial ſtate is ſo highly conducive to our well being, ſo congenial to our feelings, and ſo neceſſary to our habits, that whatever tends to diminiſh its pleaſures, whatever by contradicting the general ſenſe tends to break the bonds of general union, never fails of exciting a ſtrenuous averſion. Shame is therefore of all thoſe motives which have been mentioned perhaps the moſt powerful, and the opinion of the world of courſe the moſt general rule of conduct. That this opinion then be not erroneous—that an inſtrument which might be ſo efficaciouſly employed in the ſervice of virtue, be not laviſhed on trifling, or perverted to improper purpoſes, is a matter of real importance. When I ſee men ſhunned and ridiculed whoſe offences are of no deeper complexion than the ſpeaking with a provincial accent, or the employing an unfaſhionable tradeſman—when I behold the ſtigma of general cenſure affixed to petty awkwardneſſes and unimportant deviations from the laws of artificial politeneſs, I cannot but regret that inelegance ſhall be puniſhed as a heinous offence againſt ſociety, and ruſticity be placed on a level with vice. Thoſe who doubt of the criminality of the one may thus, by the want of due diſcernment, be led into dangerous errors reſpecting the other.

But whatever degree of cenſure this miſpending the treaſures of a public ſanction on frivolous objects may deſerve, abuſing them to the evident purpoſes of raiſing vice, or depreciating virtue cannot be too ſtrongly reprobated. As the creature is inferior to the Creator in wiſdom—the duſt to him who formed it—ſo is it alſo in power. A law of opinion then which pronounces in contra-

diction to the natural or revealed law of the deity is in itſelf a nullity, and in its motives treaſonous: an attempt of gigantic inſolence to aſſault the ſkies, and a profane rebellion of the ſons of earth againſt the Majeſty of Heaven.

Amongſt thoſe things which are wickedly made at times the objects of unreaſonable ſhame, I am ſorry to be obliged to particularize religion. As a topic of converſation it is by the authoritative laws of modern opinion completely proſcribed, and as a rule of practice it is only permitted to interfere, when convenience, or intereſt, or honour, or politeneſs do not think proper to oppoſe it. Yet that he who cannot pretend to have been ſelf-created, and who feels in himſelf continual proofs of dependence and inſufficiency, ſhould be aſhamed of acknowledging his obligations to the only being from whom he could have derived his exiſtence and continued ſupport, is a degree of ingratitude which the world would in no other caſe overlook, or excuſe. What can be more inconſiſtent than that he, who would quit a company when his friend or his patron were ſpoken of with ſlight, ſhould yet ſit with the utmoſt compoſure, when the name of his beſt benefactor is blaſphemed and vilified; and though his indignation would riſe againſt thoſe who preſume to ridicule his opinions on the moſt trifling points, ſhould yet leave the religion which he profeſſes, and which he believes, at the mercy of the witling and the buffoon?

When I ſee a perſon, whoſe habits have taught him to conſider religion merely as a political inſtrument, indulging himſelf in ſome faſhionable raillery againſt its profeſſors—when I ſee a degraded profligate venting his cheap and coarſe jeſts againſt thoſe ſacred volumes, which as they teach morality he has never attempted to underſtand, I am not at all ſurprized: but when I find them liſtened to and not oppoſed by men whoſe lives are regular, and whoſe underſtandings are not debauched—who frequent the places appropriated to divine worſhip, and are perhaps training up families to piety and virtue, I am really at a loſs to account for a conduct ſo diſſonant from their practice, and ſo derogatory to their profeſſions. They muſt appear to feel no genuine reſpect to their Creator if they are afraid to avow the reaſonableneſs of his ſervice: and it is in vain for them to appeal in proof of their ſincerity to the correctneſs of their morals, which will be aſcribed to any accidental cauſe rather than to a convinced ſenſe of the truth of that, to which they are aſhamed of giving an open, and decided ſupport.

I know indeed that one of the eſtabliſhed rules of good breeding preſcribes that nothing of a very ſerious nature ſhall be ſuffered to intrude on the eaſe of poliſhed ſociety—a rule, which thoſe who make riſibility the characteriſtic of man's nature may perhaps approve, but which all who conſider man as a rational and accountable being, muſt deem no other than an abdication of the moſt profitable uſe of his beſt faculties—a rule, calculated to make converſation unintereſting as well as unedifying, and to diffuſe around a company that ſort of vapid gaiety which, like a perpetual ſmile on the human countenance, is an indication rather of folly than of chearfulneſs. But even ſuppoſing the propriety of this rule indiſputable, the violation of it is chargeable not on him who makes,

but

but on him who provokes the reply—not on him who follows the ſubject which has been already introduced, but on him who has been the firſt to introduce it. The tribunals of public juſtice refer all violence to the original aggreſſor, and I know of none more offenſive, and leſs excuſeable than the petulant jeſter on religion—the coxcomb who attacks the moſt ſerious of all ſubjects with the meaneſt of all arguments.

There is another of the laws of politeneſs which by an eaſy miſinterpretation may be alſo brought to bear hard againſt religion. It is certainly unpolite to touch on whatever may in any reſpect hurt the feelings of your company, and as what is diſagreeable, or otherwiſe cannot always be known beforehand, that very ſafe method is recommended of bringing forward only ſuch topics of converſation as are perfectly indifferent, and adopting ſuch modes of practice as are known to be univerſally in uſe. Thus I have known the man of the houſe and his viſitor lounge away uncomfortably and unprofitably a whole Sunday morning from a mutual deference to an irreligion which each falſely ſuppoſe in the other: in which they act with the ſame degree of wiſdom which they ſhewed as ſchool-boys, when, accidentally thrown together, they were aſhamed of ſaying their prayers in preſence of each other. But that is certainly a falſe rule in politeneſs which teaches, that I can beſt entertain my company by converſation on ſubjects ſo trite and familiar, as to admit no debate, and to call forth no new idea: and however I may wiſh to accommodate my practice to their feelings or opinions, I am not permitted to do it at the expenſe of any duty I may owe elſewhere. Why ſhould I ſuppoſe that my gueſt is not actuated by thoſe motives of which I acknowledge the propriety in myſelf? And why ſhall I preſume him to be irreligious, when, in preſuming him to be ſuch, my own conduct teſtifies that I muſt preſume him abſurd and unprincipled?

All regulations of civil intercourſe have for their principle the avoiding occaſions of offence—and is the religious man the only perſon who is to be excluded from their benefit? In the preſence of thoſe who profeſs medicine or law, none will attempt to ſpeak contemptuouſly of the art, or to throw out ſneers againſt the habits or the utility of its profeſſors—before the gameſter or the duelliſt few will be found prompt to hazard a cenſure on gaming or duelling: if the religious man is not treated with equal deference, though we cannot ſufficiently condemn thoſe who do not ſcruple to inſult him, becauſe his principles ſecure them from the fear of perſonal chaſtiſement, yet certainly ſome part of the blame muſt attach on himſelf—on his reluctance againſt appearing in his true character—on the ſervility that makes him ſeem to acquieſce in opinions which he could confute, and practices which he muſt condemn—and all this from a prepoſterous cowardice, fearing the cenſure of vicious and fooliſh men, while it ſlights the diſapprobation, and braves the terrors of that being who is all-wiſe and almighty.

But while I thus urge the ſpirited exertion of defenſive piety, let it not be ſuppoſed that I recommend an indiſcriminate introduction of religious topics into general converſation. It would injure the cauſe of religion to bring it forward

when

when times might be unſeaſonable and to minds unprepared for its reception. I am far from recommending what would at once be condemned as an oſtentatious diſplay of affected ſanctity, and yet I would aſk, is not he who affects appearing more vicious than he really is, guilty of an hypocriſy of a more extraordinary, and more culpable kind? If thoſe who acknowledge a religious principle in themſelves were but to conſider how uſeful their avowal of it might often be to confirm the irreſolute, and to encourage the inexperienced, they would not, it might be hoped, withhold the ſanction of examples which might overawe the vicious, and perhaps in the end out-number them. For it cannot be doubted that if all thoſe perſons, who are now, for ſome reaſon or other, aſhamed to avow their religion, were by any means once forced from their neutrality, men are not ſo blind to argument and intereſt, but that by much the greateſt part would marſhall themſelves on its ſide.

After all, I am convinced that the true cauſe which makes men at any time aſhamed of their religion, as well as the main ſtrength of thoſe erroneous rules which operate to make it unfaſhionable, muſt be a miſtaken notion of religion itſelf. Men, who have been uſed to aſſociate with it ideas of gloomineſs and auſterity, will not be inclined to give it a cordial reception themſelves, much leſs to introduce it to others. Such aſſociations, like the dead bodies, by the command of the tyrant, joined to thoſe of the living, cannot fail to deſtroy the vital ſpirit of religion. Religion does not incapacitate man for any of the offices of active life, nor does it deny him the innocent pleaſures of ſociety. The ways of Chriſtianity are ways of pleaſantneſs, and nothing is incompatible with it but vice. If men could be perſuaded to combat againſt their vices, there is no doubt but religion would meet more zealous advocates and extenſive ſupport.

f.

D U B L I N:

Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.

[Price, Two Pence.]

The Editor will thankfully receive from the Friends of Literature, any communications they may favour him with on the ſubjects appropriated to the nature of this publication.

Perſons deſirous of having this paper ſent to the country, are requeſted to apply to the Clerks of the Roads at the General Poſt Office;—complete ſets may now be had at MERCIER'S.

[A Letter Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER XVII.

TUESDAY, MARCH 29, 1796.

Rectius vives Licini, neque altum
Semper urgendo ; neque dum procellas
Cautus horreſcis nimium premendo
Littus iniquum.

HOR,

Truſt not, my friend, too far th' adventurous deep,
Nor yet along the dangerous ſhore with timid caution creep.

TO THE FLAPPER.

" SIR,

" I HAVE the misfortune to be an old bachelor, and what is worſe, am " now too far advanced in life to remedy an evil it has conſtantly been my " intention to prevent ; for I never had any ſerious diſlike to matrimony, " and might, perhaps, have long ago been the beloved huſband of an amiable " wife and the reſpected father of a family, had not my prudent parents in- " ſtilled early into my mind a degree of ſuſpicion and caution that has been " the bane of my happineſs through life. I was taught, before I was *of age*, " to conſider myſelf as a man of large fortune who had *a right* to expect to " marry an heireſs, as if the not wanting money eſtabliſhed a plea to demand " it; and I was aſſured by my partial mother, that I might unite myſelf to ' any girl I pleaſed,' that ' all the young women in the neighbourhood were ' ſetting their caps at me, and would be overjoyed by my attentions.' Whe- " ther this were true or falſe I did not take much pains to examine, as I was " not ſufficiently intereſted by any one of them to make the experiment : " but I rather believe I was not ſo great an object of their anxious wiſhes, as " thay have all of them, ſince, made excellent wives to my acquaintance.

" From twenty to five and twenty I had many tranſient paſſions, which my " fickleneſs or my caution ſoon deſtroyed. I was near thirty, when for the " firſt time I became truly intereſted with the manners and character of " a charming girl who came to pay a viſit in our neighbourhood. Had I fol- " lowed the inclinations of my own heart I ſhould ſoon have declared my " paſſion for her ; but as ſhe had little or no fortune, my watchful parents " found a thouſand trifling foibles in her which had wholly eſcaped my obſer- " vation : they conſtrued her gaiety into coquetry, and her innocent frankneſs " into levity. It is certain they did not perſuade me to be of their opinion, " but I was in the habit of being cautious, and reſolved to leave her ignorant

" of my attachment till I had time to examine her diſpoſition thoroughly. " What I ſuffered from this reſtraint is not to be deſcribed—for, as I invo- " luntarily attended more particularly to her than to any other perſon, ſhe " ſoon, from the natural ſweetneſs of her character, began to treat me with " a kind of friendly eaſe, which my wiſhes miſtook for a decided preference, " and which I endeavoured to improve by every little art that might mark my " affection without betraying my paſſion. This growing intimacy was con- " firmed by a particular friend of mine being the youthful companion and " favourite of her brother. He had often ſpoken to me of her—ſhe " even aſſured me he commended my character in the warmeſt terms; " this added to my hopes that ſhe was prepoſſeſſed in my favour—but it did " not deſtroy my caution. After a few months ſpent in this agreeable inter- " courſe, I thought I perceived a change in her manners; an increaſing pen- " ſiveneſs ſeemed to ſteal on her every hour. I ſtrove in a thouſand ways to " trace the cauſe of this change, and endeavoured to obtain her confidence by " a fictitious recital of my paſſion for another. This I did, as well to conceal " my love as to mark what impreſſion it made on her.—Whenever I ſpoke on " this ſubject, ſhe liſtened to me with a degree of ſoftneſs and attention that " convinced me I was intereſting her heart, though perhaps unknown to her- " ſelf. She often envied me, ſhe ſaid, that fortune, which enabled me to in- " dulge my affections, and at the ſame time to prove they were generous and " diſintereſted.

" In the beginning of winter ſhe returned to Dublin—I was languid and " uneaſy the moment ſhe left the country. I then deteſted the caution that " had made me neglect ſuch favourable opportunities of avowing my paſſion— " I feared a hundred unknown rivals might poſſeſs all the advantages my " ſuſpicions had deprived me of, and that they might ſucceſsfully plead affecti- " ons I had been too prudent to own: this idea tormented me ſo much that " I reſolved to follow her to town, and try through the medium of my friend " to have myſelf introduced to the lady ſhe lived with. It was in vain my " parents ſtrove to detain me—in vain they told me I was deceived, and that " my miſtreſs was uſing every artifice to *draw me in* to marry her—I no longer " liſtened to their cold advice, but flew with an anxious heart to the capital. " My friend was not in town; I would not write to him for fear he ſhould " ſuſpect my paſſion, but I reſolved to hazard a viſit to Maria herſelf without " any introduction.

" She received me with the moſt flattering warmth, and preſented me to " her aunt as the friend who had made her time paſs ſo pleaſantly in the " country. I never ſaw her look ſo intereſting; there was a peculiar tender- " neſs in her countenance which was in general very lively, and an unuſual " ſoftneſs in the tone of her voice that vibrated on my heart. I gazed on her " for ſome moments with a delight that threw me off my guard. Her aunt " was called away—' what ails you, Belville,' ſaid ſhe, immediately, ' ſome- ' thing has agitated you this morning—let me be your confidant, you cannot ' tell how much I may ſympathize with your feelings.' At this moment my

" curſed

" curſed prudence returned—I thought ſhe was indelicately endeavouring to " force a declaration from me, and I *coolly* replied, ſhe *choſe* to *fancy* me agi- " tated, for I was never more tranquil, or more rejoiced to ſee her look ſo " well. She ſmiled, I ſuppoſe at the ſudden change in my manner, and " aſked me if I had heard any thing from my friend Beauchamp ſince ſhe left " the country, for ſhe feared he was not well, as they had not heard from him " ſince his father had loſt his fortune in the Weſt Indies.—' Poor fellow!' " ſhe added, ' 'tis a pity the generoſity of his nature ſhould be checked by ' poverty'—her aunt returning, interrupted the converſation, and I took my " leave.

" I continued, during the winter, rather to watch, than to attend her " to every public place, in conſtant anxiety leſt ſhe ſhould captivate or " prefer ſome lover leſs cautious than myſelf; but I had the delight to obſerve " ſhe liſtened to their flattery and received all their attention with the moſt " perfect indifference, while ſhe continued to treat me with the ſame freedom " as uſual. She would ſometimes ſay, that from hearing me well ſpoken of " by our friend, ſhe had formed a cloſer intimacy with me than with others " from a longer acquaintance. I received every little ſpeech of this kind as " a ſort of delicate apology for the preference ſhe feared to mark too ſtrongly " for me, and was ſo ſatisfied with her conduct now that ſhe mixed more " with the world, that I reſolved to diſcloſe my paſſion to her the firſt time we " were alone. The moment I had come to this determination my heart ſeem- " ed relieved from a weight that had oppreſſed it, and I counted the moments " till I could throw myſelf at her feet. When I called on her the next " morning, I was ſo agitated with my intention that I ran into the drawing " room without ſtopping to ſpeak to Beauchamp, who met me on the ſtairs. " She was ſitting alone with her back to the door, and ſo immerſed in thought " that ſhe did not perceive the noiſe I made in entering. As I advanced to- " wards her, I ſaw ſhe had been weeping—my heart beat with painful violence— ' Maria,' I exclaimed, ' dear Maria,' (taking her hands in mine) ' what ' afflicts you thus, let me, oh let me have the joy of ſoothing your mind, ' tell me it is in my power to comfort you, and my future life' —She ſtarted, " and bluſhed deeply at the earneſtneſs of my manner, and at my attitude, for " I had ſunk on one knee as I ſpoke. ' Riſe, Belville,' ſhe ſaid, in a tone of " ſurprize, ' that is not the poſture of Beauchamp's friend'—I trembled from " head to foot—' of Beauchamp's friend!' I repeated, ' what has he to do ' between us?' ' Be calm, Belville,' ſaid ſhe heſitating, ' and you ſhall ' ſee my thoughts. ' Beauchamp was the companion of my childhood, and ' won my heart before I knew I had one to beſtow. The ſudden change in his ' fortune made him reſolve on endeavouring to deſtroy my affection for him, ' though he nouriſhed with painful fondneſs his affection me. This has ' been the cauſe of his long abſence, and I confeſs his neglecting to write ' to me occaſioned that dejection of ſpirits you have ſo often noticed. Un- ' avoidable buſineſs brought him yeſterday to Dublin, and he could not reſiſt ' his inclination to ſee me once more. We breakfaſted together this morning,

' and

'and he is now gone to ſolicit the conſent of my friends to an union which 'will be endeared by the poverty we embrace for each other.'

"I was thunderſtruck with the intelligence, which brought to my mind "a thouſand little circumſtances that ought to have excited my apprehenſions "long before: but endeavouring to conceal my emotion I prayed with heart-"felt anguiſh for her happineſs, ſincerely lamenting that ungenerous caution, "which had betrayed me into the deepeſt miſery—the diſappointment of a "paſſion that I had ſuffered to remain unchecked, by not diſcloſing it till it was "too late to expect a cure. In a few months ſhe was united to my friend— "'twas long before I could venture to witneſs their happineſs, though Beau-"champ was ignorant of my paſſion and continued to ſolicit my friendſhip; "but I am now become one of their family circle, and the children of Maria "play around me whilſt I write. They are my offspring by adoption, and the "tranſport I feel in providing for them is now the only happineſs I ever hope "to enjoy. I ſhall be well ſatisfied if this recital of my ſituation is of any uſe to "your readers, or tends to imprint on their minds the opinion that a gene-"rous dependence on the virtues of others is neceſſary to our own welfare, "and that the cold ſuſpicions of maturity are not leſs deſtructive to happineſs "than the imprudences of youth.

"BELVILLE."

In complying with my correſpondent's wiſh to have the above publiſhed, I have been partly induced by the intimation which he has given me, of its being a narrative of facts; as ſuch, (tho' the cataſtrophe may be leſs ſtriking than it might eaſily have been made in a mere work of imagination) I doubt not but it will be conſidered as well deſerving attention. The falſe caution which it tends to expoſe is never more blameable than when it trifles with the affections of an amiable woman: and my fair readers in particular will feel little compaſſion for a man, who from an illiberal ſuſpiciouſneſs of temper could miſtake for artifice the mere reſult of that ingenuous ſimplicity which really forms one of the brighteſt ornaments of the ſex.

X.

DUBLIN:

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The Flapper.

NUMBER XVIII.

SATURDAY, APRIL 2, 1796.

WHEN I undertook my preſent taſk I flattered myſelf with the hopes of frequent aſſiſtance from the friends of literature and morals who abound in our country. In this expectation I have not been diſappointed. I have had numerous correſpondents—of both ſexes—of all ages, ranks, and profeſſions—and of every various rate of underſtanding and habit of thinking. Some of their communications I have occaſionally laid before the public—and have had great pleaſure in finding they met a reception which juſtified my preference. The topics which my correſpondents at preſent chiefly ſeem diſpoſed to treat of are female dreſs and the theatres, private and public. Not leſs than ſeventeen letters—ſerious and comic—from milliners, cynics, ladies and ladies maids on the former ſubject, with a large aſſortment of critiques and puffs on the latter, lie at this moment on my table. Not having yet balanced the account pro and con with reſpect to the theatrical claſs—and having paid as much attention to the criticks on drapery as I could, without hazarding the favour of my fair readers, I ſet all aſide for the preſent, and give an eſſay from a correſpondent in the North of Ireland, who has written to me on a topic of ſuch importance as warrants my recurring to it ſo ſoon after the eſſay I publiſhed lately on the ſame ſubject.

FOR THE FLAPPER.

——— μεγα εργον, ὁ ϰ δυο γ' ανδρε Φεροιεν
Οἷοι νυν βροτοι εισ' : ὁ δε μιν ρεα παλλε ϰαι οιος.

HOMER.

Not two ſtrong men th' enormous weight could raiſe,
Such men as live in theſe degenerate days.

" SIR,

" FROM the time of Homer to the preſent day, the poet and the moraliſt " have complained of the degeneracy of mankind. In thoſe ages when cor- " poreal ſtrength was conſidered the moſt dignified quality of human nature,

T " it

" it was pathetically lamented that the exiſting race of men were weaker than " their progenitors, that they could not whirl the ſling, or dart the javelin " with equal force. As ſtrength is generally proportioned to ſtature, it was no " leſs a ſubject of lamentation that, with the decreaſe of the ſtrength of men, " their ſize was diminiſhed, and that none could then be found of equal di- " menſions with thoſe of the preceding ages.

" When, in times leſs barbarous, men began to diſcover that virtue and " wiſdom were as eſſential to the perfection of our nature as ſtrength and ſta- " ture, the ſubject of complaint changed with the change of opinion—then it " came to be a topic of poetical declamation, that the world was overrun with " vice, that Aſtrea had taken her flight from earth, and that juſtice, piety, " and truth, every ſevere, and every gentle virtue, had departed in her " train.

" That nature has a tendency to degenerate in her productions, and that the " moral character of mankind is verging continually towards depravation, ſeems " to be the complaint of moroſe theoriſts, little ſupported by rational obſerva- " tion on the natural or moral hiſtory of man. The human bodies which have " been found in the catacombs of Egypt ſeem not to have exceeded in ſize or " ſtrength thoſe of the preſent day, and the advances made in civilization by " greater facility of intercourſe between diſtant countries, the great improve- " ments which have taken place in the ſtock of natural knowledge, and the " general influence of chriſtianity, as far as it has been propagated, will not al- " low us to think that in manners or in morals man can have degenerated. In " the remoteſt ages of which we have any authentic information we find ac- " cordingly that crimes were perpetrated as black and as numerous as thoſe " which are committed in more modern times, even the golden age itſelf " affording inſtances of uſurpation, violence and murder. The poſition of " Deſcartes, which aſſerts that there is always an equal quantity of motion in the " world ſeems not leſs deſervedly exploded than the uncomfortable opinion in " morals, that, in ſpite of knowledge, and of zeal, the quantity of vice through " every age muſt in the ſame country be exactly the ſame. He, however, " who alleges that mankind are not upon the whole more wicked now than " they formerly were, may yet, and if he be an obſerver of manners, " and capable of comparing the preſent with the paſt, will moſt certainly allow " that, at different times, different vices may prevail, and that, therefore, at " any given time a given vice may be more general and malignant than at any " former period.

" Among thoſe faults or follies which diſhonourably diſtinguiſh the preſent " day, I will not heſitate to affirm, that infidelity holds the foremoſt rank. It " has more or leſs tainted every claſs of ſociety, and from the men of much " reading, much pride, and little intellect, to whom it formerly belonged, it " has now deſcended to thoſe who have no pretenſions to learning, and can " lay no claim to ſuperior talents. From the dizzy ſummit of the rock on

" which

" which it had perched itſelf by the ſide of a ſceptical philoſophy, it has tra-
" velled into the humble vale where the multitude grovel; and from being
" made the theme of learned ſophiſtry and eloquent declamation, we are con-
" demned to hear it in the garrulity of women, and in the babble of children.

" To what cauſe are we to attribute the enormous growth of this miſchievous
" evil? Is it to more minute reſearches that have been made into the grounds
" of religious faith? To a more cloſe inveſtigation of the proofs of revelation?
" To a more accurate eſtimation of the merit of its moral precepts, or a
" ſtricter ſcrutiny into the fitneſs of its rewards and puniſhments, with relati-
" on to the attributes of the deity? Surely not: for thoſe who are moſt
" loud in oppoſition to revealed religion are thoſe who are moſt ignorant of
" the proofs on which it reſts, and evidently leaſt qualified to enquire into its
" truth or falſehood.

" Of the generality of mankind it will be found, that they take up opinions,
" not becauſe on examination they appear to be founded on truth, but becauſe
" they are connected, or accord with others which they have already adopted,
" not on enquiry but on truſt. The increaſe of infidelity may perhaps be ac-
" counted for on this principle. That a kind of political ſcepticiſm has of late
" years grown to a degree much beyond the example of former times, the
" events which are paſſing before us, and which we have witneſſed within our
" memory afford ſufficient proof. Though, abſtractedly conſidered, religion
" has no peculiar connection with forms of government, or ſyſtems of policy,
" yet by the poſitive inſtitutions of almoſt every country a religious eſtabliſh-
" ment has been interwoven with its political conſtitution. Thoſe, therefore,
" who in the rage of modern innovation have wiſhed to ſubvert the one,
" found it neceſſary as a preliminary meaſure to deny the utility of the other.
" From denying the utility of the eſtabliſhment, the tranſition was eaſy to
" denying the truth of the principle; and thus by a kind of neceſſary conſe-
" quence innovation in politics induced infidelity in religion.

" To this error it is neceſſary for the preſent peace and future happineſs of
" thoſe who labour under its influence, that ſome remedy ſhould be applied. It
" therefore becomes the duty of every friend to mankind to inculcate on thoſe
" by whom his admonitions may be regarded, that religion and civil policy ſtand
" on very different foundations; that religion, the comfort and the hope of
" man, reſts on the certain truth of revelation, while the maxims of political
" ſcience are derived only from the experience of paſt times, connected with
" the exiſting circumſtances of the preſent hour. Reaſon is indeed the
" judge of both: reaſon muſt weigh the arguments which go to prove that a
" revelation has been made, and to reaſon we muſt appeal for the determinati-
" on of what is wiſe and true in government; but here lies the great diſtincti-
" on: with reſpect to religion, reaſon operates but on the ſingle queſtion;
" with reſpect to policy, ſhe muſt continually determine not only from fixed
" principles, but from changing circumſtances. In politics, therefore, diffe-

" rent

" rent opinions may, at different times, perhaps at the ſame time, be true : " with reſpect to the authenticity of religion as founded on revelation, truth, " through all changes of time and place, can only be on one ſide.

" Could this poſition, the truth of which is nearly as clear as that of a " ſelf-evident propoſition, be thoroughly impreſſed on thoſe who as being the " leſs thoughtful are therefore the more dogmatical, it would perhaps ſerve the " intereſts of religion, and therefore the intereſts of human happineſs, more " effectually than polemic volumes written in defence of its authenticity : for " unqueſtionably men become infidels, not from reaſon, but from prejudice and " paſſion ; not becauſe they cannot ſee the truth, but becauſe that truth is " ſuppoſed to bear againſt a favourite ſyſtem, and is believed to be inconſiſtent " with received opinions, or the gratification of ſome favourite propenſity.

" That it ſhould be neceſſary by laborious arguments to induce reaſonable " beings to examine diſpaſſionately, and decide without prejudice, a queſtion, " in the deciſion of which error muſt be followed by irremediable miſchief, " cannot but ſeem wonderful—yet this neceſſity experience proves. Pride, no " contemptible antagoniſt, ſets herſelf againſt reaſon and truth, and the " other paſſions are zealous to enrol themſelves under her ſtandard. With what " forces ſhall reaſon meet them? With arguments of infinite weight ; with the " authority of the beſt and wiſeſt men ; with the poſſibility of error from par- " tial conſideration, and with the certainty that error in this inſtance, from " whatever cauſe ariſing, muſt produce conſequences co-extenſive with " eternity!

K.

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[A Letter Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER XIX.

TUESDAY, APRIL 5, 1796.

Noſtri farrago libelli.

JUVENAL.

Motley's the only wear.

SHAKESPEARE'S As You Like It.

TO THE FLAPPER.

"SIR,

"I AM a country gentleman of about five hundred pounds a year, which "tho' inadequate to procuring the luxuries and elegancies enjoyed by thoſe of "larger fortune, was yet, I fondly imagined, equal to obtaining for its unaſ- "piring poſſeſſor the ſolid comforts of life. Not being mercenary in my diſ- "poſition I was actuated in my choice of a partner by a deſire of being *happy*, "which I have never conſidered as ſynonimous with being *rich*; and as I have "a particular paſſion for neatneſs, I addreſſed myſelf to a young woman of "very moderate pecuniary expectations, with gentle and pleaſing manners, "and whoſe attention to the article of perſonal cleanlineſs gave me reaſon to "hope that in my family I ſhould be conſtantly bleſſed with the chearing "proſpect of order and regularity.

"For ſome time after our arrival in the country my houſe exhibited the "appearance of perfect ſymmetry, but to my inexpreſſible mortification I ſoon "diſcovered that my boaſted happineſs was deſtined to be but of ſhort duration— "my wife inſenſibly relaxed in thoſe attentions to her perſon which at firſt had "charmed me, 'till in about the ſpace of a year and a half I had the misfortune "to find myſelf wedded to a complete ſlattern. No longer do I behold my "dwelling that pattern of ſimple neatneſs I had known it while I remained a "batchelor—all now is duſt and gloom—my boy, for whom I feel a father's "affection, is in general ſo diſguſtingly dirty, that I am forced to relinquiſh "the ſatisfaction of taking him in my arms or dandling him on my knee, and "as at preſent his youth renders him inſeparable from his nurſe, (who is a very "Hottentot,) I am almoſt obliged to reſign the pleaſure of looking at him. "If I attempt to remonſtrate, my wife replies, 'my dear, were an infant of "that age dreſſed ten times a day it would ſtill be impoſſible to keep him "clean.' In this reaſoning, however illogical, I muſt acquieſce, as, after all, I "love my wife too well not to prefer palliatives to an exerciſe of authority, "which beſides diſturbing the tranquillity of my houſe would probably but "imperfectly remedy the abuſes of which I complain, people being ever "known to perform ill that which they perform reluctantly. When we have "company it is true we make ſome exertions, and on ſuch occaſions I have "the comfort of ſitting down to a neat dinner, and ſeeing my wife metamor-

" phoſed in my eyes into a Venus by the ſimple aid of cleanlineſs—but even " theſe tranſient gleams of chearfulneſs are too dearly purchaſed by the days " of dull confuſion which precede them—habitual neatneſs being wholly neg- " lected, it is neceſſary when we ſee our friends to undergo ſuch univerſal pu- " rification, that my houſe on ſuch occaſions reſembles a ſhip performing qua- " rantine, with this aggravating circumſtance, that a two days bill of health " will be the utmoſt compenſation.

" I am fond of muſic, and as my wife's parents endeavoured in the culture " of her mind to compenſate her want of fortune, ſhe was inſtructed in all the " faſhionable accompliſhments. Of theſe too I flattered myſelf I might derive " the fruits, but, alas! I am here again miſtaken—my wife, though not defici- " ent in affection for me, ſeems, like many other females, to think that after " having acquired, what is called an eſtabliſhment, it is unneceſſary any more to " cultivate the art of pleaſing—to me it appears that, where people are to paſs " their lives together, the ſtudy of this delightful art becomes doubly amiable, " as doubly uſeful; but as I have vainly ſought to inculcate this doctrine, my " only hope now, Mr. Flapper, reſts on your friendly aſſiſtance: as I have " obſerved with regret that mine is not a ſingular ſituation, I have alſo the " ſatisfactory reflection that a publication of this detail may tend to public as " well as private utility. Perſuade the fair ſex that a taſte for neatneſs and " elegance of perſon is the index of a refined underſtanding; that, in the " words of Rochefoucault, 'cleanlineſs is to the body what education is to " the mind;' and laſtly convince them, ſtill in the words of that celebrated au- " thor, that 'it is as neceſſary to ſtudy the art of making *cages* as *nets*.'

" I have the honour to be, Sir,

" Your humble and obedient ſervant,

" RUSTICUS."

TO THE FLAPPER.

" MR. FLAPPER,

" In my diſtreſs I fly to you for ſuccour. The law courts I am told would " reject any action brought in my name, and there are few perſons who in pri- " vate would acknowledge a friendſhip for me, or take my part againſt my ca- " lumniators. Your paper, Mr. Flapper, affords me my only opportunity of " juſtification. Many miſchiefs and miſdemeanors, Sir, are hourly laid at my " door, of which I am wholly innocent. When any perſon is ſpoken of as " the moſt infamous of men, Nobody is ſaid to be more infamous—when " any lying ſtory is circulated, Nobody is declared the inventor of it—and " ſometimes when atrocious crimes have been committed, you read in the " newſpapers of Nobody's having been detected in the fact. I am derided, " Sir, as much as I am deteſted—clothes which are unfaſhionable are termed " ſuch as Nobody wears, and if you had a ſpite againſt any man, you could " not place him in a more diſreſpectable light than by ſaying that Nobody " knows him.

" Theſe attacks proceed I know from perſons who having never ſeen me or " known my place of reſidence, imagine that the duties they owe their neighbours " can have nothing to do in this caſe. But their principal cauſe I have always " traced to a ſtrange confuſion between me and Somebody, from whom I do

" aſſure

" aſſure you, Sir, I differ in almoſt every particular. Yet Somebody often " claims the merit of actions which Nobody performs, and, from the days of " Ulyſſes and Polyphemus to the preſent, for much of the miſchief, private " and public, which Somebody has committed, Nobody has been puniſhed. " My lady's gown is ſtolen—the houſe-keeper's china is broken—doubtleſs by " Somebody, yet Nobody is turned out of his place for it: and even the " Prime Miniſter of England ſeems to have been led into this unfortunate con- " fuſion, for when Somebody diſturbed the kingdom by his treaſonous conſpi- " racies he has had Nobody convicted for them. Do, Mr. Flapper, warn the " public of their miſtake—ſurely a little reflection will convince them that my " enemy and I cannot poſſibly be in the ſame place at the ſame time, and that " our opinions on all ſubjects are diametrically oppoſite. When Nobody can " obtain a ſeat in the play-houſe, Somebody will be ſent from the door—Some- " body may be ſought for in vain in the city, when Nobody is in town, and " when Nobody goes to the country, you are ſure of finding Somebody in the " city—all theſe aſſertions which Somebody is ready to make in every compa- " ny Nobody attempts to contradict, and wherever Nobody has ſupported one " ſide of the queſtion Somebody will be always found on the oppoſite—can " any two characters be more different?

" My enemy himſelf is forced occaſionally to join in my praiſes and allow " my ſuperiority. A few days ſince Somebody declared in the Houſe of Com- " mons that Nobody had more virtue and patriotiſm than he—and Somebo- " dy's couſins, Any-body and Every-body, will tell you that Nobody pleads the " cauſe of the widow and the orphan with more ability and ſucceſs than Mr. " Kirwan—and yet they ſay in the ſame breath that Nobody, who pretends " to be a man of ſpirit, will patiently ſuffer himſelf to be kicked, and that No- " body cares for the worthleſs and the ſcoundrel. By your interpoſition, Mr. " Flapper, I hope to ſet the public right as to my character, and I doubt not, " if you exert yourſelf, that after ſome time Nobody will be as great a favou- " rite as the Flapper. Tell the world that Nobody does more good actions " than bad ones—that Nobody does his duty conſcientiouſly and without " hope of reward—that Nobody now-a-days (whatever he might have done " formerly) reads the bible conſtantly—that Nobody can vie with the greateſt " heroes and beſt authors of antiquity—that Nobody pays his tradeſmen punc- " tually and ſtands forth the uniform ſupporter of the intereſt of his country. " Quote, Mr. Flapper, the Latin adage, expreſſing my extraordinary and con- " ſummate wiſdom, *Nemo omnibus horis ſapit*—do juſtice to me with your " uſual ability and good-nature, and you may reſt aſſured that Nobody will " have as great a regard for you as for himſelf.

" Your's, &c.

" NOBODY."

TO THE FLAPPER.

" DEAR SIR,

" My life has been for the moſt part ſpent in the country. I have always " been unmarried and am at preſent above fifty years of age. I have lately " come up to Dublin about ſome law buſineſs, and at my attorney Mr. Habeas's " houſe, have become acquainted with a near relation of his, Mrs. Matchall.

" In

" In the ſweet ſociety of her amiable family I have ſpent my evenings for theſe " ten days paſt, in ſhort ever ſince our acquaintance began.

" In the courſe of this intimacy I have often been induced to think the " ſtate of an old batchelor very pitiable. His hours are ſo ſolitary, Mr. Flap- " per—utterly in want of all elegant family converſation and comfort. The " company I meet at Mrs. Matchall's are continually railing at old batchelors— " but ſhe herſelf is too polite to join in any thing which might reflect on me. " We generally ſit together, and I find this amiable woman's thoughts are ſo " totally fixed on her eldeſt daughter that we ſeldom talk of any thing elſe. " The young lady is not handſome, but then ſhe is extremely affable—nor " have I heard that ſhe has any fortune, but then her œconomy and prudence " would really ſave for any huſband a fortune. Mrs. Matchall, who has tho- " roughly ſtudied her diſpoſition, declares her to be a girl of a moſt domeſtic " turn and moſt ſympathetic diſpoſitions. Happy, ſays ſhe, will be, Mr. Gulli- " ble—happy, ſays ſhe to me, will be that man who gets my Jenny.

" My friend Habeas is always rating me about her—ſhe is actually, he ſays, " pining for love for me. Undoubtedly, if I thought this, I ſhould propoſe for " her immediately, and try my chance with her mother. Near ſixty years of " age, and in a declining ſtate of health! any girl who takes a liking to a man " in ſuch circumſtances muſt have a ſincere affection indeed for him. Yeſter- " day I thought I perceived ſomething of what Habeas told me. I often " caught Miſs Jenny's eyes fixed on me, and two or three times heard her ſigh " as if there was ſomething heavy at her heart. Her ſtate will not leave me " time to conſult my relations in the country, and perhaps they might be inte- " reſted to oppoſe the match. I depend much on the propriety of your advice, " Mr. Flapper—do tell me whether I ought to propoſe for her to-morrow?

" Your's in haſte,
" GREGORY GULLIBLE."

I had determined to give this gentleman my advice with all ſpeed, but found myſelf ſaved from the taſk of giving an opinion on his caſe by reading in the public papers, the morning after my receiving his letter, a paragraph announcing the actual marriage of Mr. Gullible with the amiable Miſs Matchall; and, paſſing by the lady's reſidence about two o'clock, I learned that the family were all gone to ſpend ſome time at Mr. Gullible's in the country, and have ſince read on the windows an advertiſement, offering to the public, FURNISHED LODGINGS FOR SIX MONTHS.

Y. X. F.

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The Flapper.

NUMBER XX.

SATURDAY, APRIL 9, 1796.

—— Nil fuit unquam
Sic impar ſibi.

HOR.

Nothing was ever ſo inconſiſtent.

THERE is not any ſpeculation ſo univerſally intereſting as that which regards the perſonal characters of thoſe with whom we have intercourſe. Our attention is directed to the inquiry by a variety of principles. The man of a ſocial and benevolent mind muſt feel pleaſure in obſerving the good qualities of thoſe whoſe intimacy contributes to his happineſs; the man of a narrow and malignant heart will gratify his baſeneſs by ſearching out thoſe foibles in his neighbours, which are perhaps ſhaded from the view of the world by many eſtimable diſpoſitions; the ignorant will ſeek refuge from the dulneſs of his own underſtanding in obſerving and detailing the actions of thoſe around him; whilſt the philoſopher is urged to a ſimilar reſearch by the deſire of diſcovering the conſtitution of human nature, and the means of its improvement. An inquiry, which intereſts from motives ſo numerous and ſo different, it muſt be of importance to regulate. To prevent it altogether is neither deſirable nor poſſible. It is not poſſible to render ſocial beings indifferent and incurious with regard to the conduct and characters of each other; and it is not deſirable that they ſhould be precluded from a diſquiſition, which, whatever may be the inconveniencies or miſchiefs occaſioned by it in particular caſes, muſt upon the whole augment the ſum of moral knowledge, and therefore contribute to moral improvement.

When I ſay that it is not poſſible to prevent it altogether, I muſt be underſtood with ſome limitation; for I apprehend that in the higher ranks it is aboliſhed, at leaſt as furniſhing a topic of converſation. This will obviouſly be attributed to the finiſhed politeneſs of modern manners, but many collateral

 cauſes

cauſes may I imagine have contributed to occaſion it. A mutual toleration would naturally enough ſuppreſs ſubjects of this kind amongſt people, whoſe minds were ſufficiently enlarged to perceive the neceſſity of it; and beſides this, there can be little encouragement to the diſpoſition of animadverting on human character, where the manners are carefully formed after the ſame model, and of courſe little variety of character is diſplayed. Like the companions of Æneas, the members of a faſhionable ſociety might often be characterized by one undiſtinguiſhing epithet. Thus repreſſed by improved politeneſs, by faſhionable tolerance, and by the want of materials of employment, this propenſity to mutual obſervation ſeems to have retired from the firſt circles. For my part I am not deſirous of obſtructing any of the avenues to knowledge; and, if *the proper ſtudy of mankind be man*, attention to the workings of human character cannot be unimportant. I would only propoſe to regulate thoſe inquiries, and recommend ſome caution for the purpoſe of preventing haſty concluſions.

It is a very common error in forming a judgment of a character to ſuppoſe that there is a degree of conſiſtency between its parts, which is by no means actually to be found in nature. Our ſelfiſhneſs for the moſt part prevents us from falling into any very dangerous errors in the too favourable eſtimate of the principles of others, but we are not under a ſimilar reſtraint in the oppoſite caſe. Young perſons, however, are often inclined to think that openneſs of manner and a diſpoſition to intimacy are proofs of a heart incapable of intereſted views. The evil of this miſtake is in general not ſo much the actual inconvenience or injury ſuſtained in conſequence of it, as the ſuſpicious temper of mind which the diſcovery of the real character has a tendency to occaſion. This temper, which induces us to imagine that a perſon, whoſe character is faulty in ſome one particular, ſhould be conſidered as of a radically bad heart, is what experience of the world, though moſt unreaſonably, is apt to produce; and that it is unreaſonable may I think without much difficulty to be ſhewn.

Whoever will carefully conſider the characters of thoſe around him (for of his own character he will ſcarcely judge impartially) muſt perceive that they are more or leſs mixed; that there is none ſo bad as not to have ſome good qualities, and none ſo good as not to have ſome faults. This evident incongruity of human characters, of which any fair obſerver may eaſily be convinced, ſhould prevent us from concluding that a perſon, who has behaved exceptionably in ſome one inſtance, has acted from a ſettled habit; or that a perſon who is manifeſtly influenced by one bad habit, is deſtitute of any good principle. I remember, indeed, that when, in a converſation with one of my friends, I was endeavouring to excuſe a perſon with whom we were both acquainted, from the imputation of being a gameſter, which my friend had thrown

thrown on him in conſequence of having once ſeen him actually engaged in play; he demanded with much ſolemnity whether Mutius Scœvola had twice burned his right hand, or Curtius twice leaped into the gulph. Theſe men, he contended, had by ſingle acts acquired the character of habitual fortitude, and he ſaw no reaſon why our acquaintance ſhould not in like manner be regarded as an habitual gameſter. My readers, however, will I dare ſay, perceive a conſiderable diſtinction between actions requiring a degree of firmneſs, which nothing but ſettled habits could ſupply, and the occurrences of ordinary life.

Were human characters indeed to be formed at a particular period by a deliberate act of reflection, there might poſſibly be ſuch an unity in the intire plan as would enable an accurate obſerver to draw concluſions from ſome one part by which he might aſcertain the reſt. But it is not in this way that characters are formed. Accidental ſituations and caſual incidents very frequently determine in various ways the different parts of one and the ſame character; and where the aid of reflection has been called in to correct the motley aſſemblage of incongruous qualities, it is often applied unequally or partially. In judging of the probable conduct or motives of beings ſo circumſtanced, ſurely much caution ſhould be uſed. Different occaſions may call forth different diſpoſitions which had not been ſuſpected of exiſting in the ſame character. Who has not ſeen the coquetry and levity of an unthinking girl converted by the kind behaviour of an affectionate huſband into the domeſticated habits of an amiable wife? Imitation and the want of an immediate object had conſpired with youthful vanity to make her a coquet. The natural goodneſs of her heart, when brought into action by domeſtick endearment, at once threw off the diſguiſe by which it had been concealed. Belinda to a ſtranger muſt appear haughty, affected and extravagant. I, who have known her from her childhood, am convinced of the ſimplicity of her natural character, of the ſtrong affection of which ſhe is capable, and the ſacrifices which ſhe would chearfully make to teſtify her friendſhip. Unfortunately from caſual circumſtances ſhe became familiar with perſons much her ſuperiors in rank and fortune, and has taken from them, without examination, notions of imaginary refinement of manners and expence of dreſs, which offend or alarm thoſe of her own ſituation in life. But the moſt whimſical inſtance, though at the ſame time a melancholy one, of the influence of accident upon human character, is that of poor Tom Luckleſs. Tom had for many years approved himſelf a regular and induſtrious tradeſman, when on one fatal night, he was tempted to howl a chorus to Incledon's ſong of Old Towler. The applauſe, which was deſervedly beſtowed on this unlucky effort of canine imitation, overcame in an inſtant the habits of ten years, and poor Tom ſunk from the reſpectability of independent induſtry to idleneſs and the affectation of the character of a wit.

Let

Let it not, however, be thought that I would diſſuade from the exerciſe of caution in our mutual intercourſe, and recommend an indiſcriminate confidence ; that I would adviſe a man to marry a coquet or a fine lady, becauſe that poſſibly theſe characters might have been ſuperinduced by ſlight and accidental cauſes, and might in other circumſtances give place to better diſpoſitions. I would only recommend that deliberate circumſpection which ſhould make allowance for the inconſiſtency of human character; and not acquieſcing in the firſt unfavourable conception, however in appearance well authorized, ſhould anxiouſly look for theſe amiable or uſeful qualities by which it might poſſibly be corrected.

I have hitherto addreſſed myſelf only to the haſty and inconſiderate; but there is a numerous claſs of ſpeculators on character who are not entitled to ſo indulgent an appellation. The deliberately malevolent do indeed ſpeculate on the conduct and diſpoſitions of others, but not for the exerciſe of their own penetration or the acquiſition of uſeful caution. To them the qualities of the mind are inverted in their effects. What is in itſelf amiable is to them offenſive, and a criminal action affords them perhaps their higheſt gratification. In this depraved ſtate of their hearts it may be vain to urge that the imagination has not been able to conceive a more infernal diſpoſition, for in the original language a *Calumniator* is the meaning of that name which has been beſtowed on the *Devil.*

E.

DUBLIN:

Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.

[Price, Two Pence.]

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[A Letter Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER XXI.

TUESDAY, APRIL 12, 1796.

Vice is a monſter of ſo hateful mein,
As, to be hated, needs but to be ſeen:
Yet ſeen too oft', familiar with her face,
We firſt endure, then pity, then embrace.

POPE'S Eſſay on Man.

TO THE FLAPPER.

"SIR,

"OLD obſervations are by no means to be deſpiſed becauſe they are trite, "ſince that very triteneſs affords a ſtrong preſumption of their truth. The well "known maxim, '*Nemo fit repente turpiſſimus*' is of this ſpecies, and ſurely the "ſlighteſt, and indeed the deepeſt inſpection into human nature will perfectly "warrant its certainty. Man, in this world, appears to be in a conſtant ſtate "of progreſſion: conſummate virtue, as well as compleat reprobation, is only "to be attained by degrees; and while, on the one hand, ſome few there are, "who ſeem during the happy courſe of their lives to be perpetually ripening "into celeſtial perfection, many, I fear, muſt be allowed to be in a conſtant "progreſs towards infernal depravity, 'till they have at length deſcended to "ſuch a depth of wickedneſs as almoſt to provoke the ſuppoſition, if it could "be hazarded without impiety, that the power of creation was in ſome inſtan-"ces imparted to the Devil, who had formed thoſe wretches in his own image. "This progreſs of vice we find moſt ingeniouſly and moſt uſefully illuſtrated "by that great moraliſt Hogarth, in his incomparable prints intitled, 'Induſtry "and Idleneſs,' and 'the Stages of Cruelty,' compoſitions, which through the eye "reach the heart even of the moſt illiterate, with far greater effect than all the "ſtudied diſcourſes of all the profers in morals. In the former we ſee the in-"duſtrious prentice gradually riſe through a life of happineſs into affluence "and dignity, while his idle comrade proceeds through miſery to a diſgraceful "death: and in the latter, the boy, who begins by torturing flies, concludes "his wretched life by inhuman murder, the execution and the gibbet. Re-"probates of this ſort are objects for the cord not for the Flapper; but, Sir, "though the numbers which are led by vicious courſes into ſuch monſtrous acts "of horror be not, thank Heaven, comparatively great, ſtill it will be found "that multitudes are by bad habits and a frequent repetition of ſmaller offences,

"imperceptibly

" imperceptibly conducted into a ſtate of leſs atrocious criminality from " which their nature was at the beginning averſe. The proverbial innocence " of children might perhaps be preſerved through life, were it not almoſt ne- " ceſſarily counteracted and defiled by the contagion of bad example, and the " intercourſe of a depraved world.

" A winter's walk through the ſtreets of Dublin has often reminded me of " the courſe of man through life. In the morning I ſet out, my ſhoes and " ſtockings clean, and carefully pick my way to ſave myſelf from ſplaſhing. " Fearful of ſtain as is the ſpotleſs ermine, I fly from ſide to ſide to ſhun the " ſcavenger's cart, and ſhuddering avoid the contagious touch of the grimy " chimney ſweeper. Obliged to croſs the ſtreet, I chooſe the high-raiſed " pathway, and ſhun the miry puddle—*viperino ſanguine cautius.* But long " I have not walked, 'till looking behind me, I perceive with horror, that " in ſpite of all my care, the daſhing mire appears in frequent ſpots on the " back of my polluted hoſe. My ſhoes have loſt their neatneſs, and their " ſhining ſurface is every where tinged with mud. My caution now grows " leſs, and though ſtill I avoid the deeper mire, I neglect the cleanlier path, " and heedleſsly ruſh from the paved way into the ſtreet to ſhun a ſlight in- " terruption. 'Till at length, dirty as I well can be, I plunge at once through " thick and thin. Fearleſs I joſtle with the contending dirtman, equally de- " filed and defiling, and boldly wade through the deepeſt kennel to ſpare a " few yards walking. Returning home I view with concern my mire pol- " luted garb, and though I affect to ſmile at my dirty trim, ſecretly wiſh that " I had confined my walk to the clean and wholeſome path of the ſolitary " meadow, and never hazarded myſelf in the miry ſtreets of the crowded me- " tropolis.

" I am, Sir, with great eſteem,
" Your moſt obedient,
And moſt humble ſervant,
" AMBULATOR."

TO THE FLAPPER.

" SIR,

" It is now nearly two years ſince I have returned from my travels—my " progreſs through the college was attended with ſome ſucceſs; with more at " leaſt than what generally accompanies that of a young man born to certain " fortune, and therefore to almoſt certain idleneſs. The taſte for ſtudy which I " had acquired at the Univerſity having been kept alive by the precept and " example of the friend with whom I traverſed the Continent, the three years " which I paſſed abroad, whilſt they added to my experience of men, did not " eſtrange me from the ſociety of books. But it has ſo happened, that ſince " my return to this country I find it almoſt impoſſible to continue that courſe " of ſtudy, from which I hoped never to have departed, and which neither " the pleaſures nor the inconveniencies of a rambling life could divert. And

" yet

" yet, Sir, I cannot ſay that I have been engaged, during all this time in " any continued occupation, either of a ſerious or light nature—nor can I ab- " ſolutely charge myſelf with an indolent and voluntary waſte of time. I " have neither been a politician, nor a lover, nor a loiterer. In truth, I " cannot help thinking that an opinion prevails univerſally in this king- " dom, that pleaſure and happineſs are ſynonimous terms, and that buſineſs " and ſtudy are irreconcileable with pleaſure. To exclude theſe bugbears " from ſociety therefore, ſeems, not merely to be the ſelfiſh wiſh of individu- " als, but to be a ſort of duty inculcated by our national ethics, and which is " practiced equally for the ſervice of our friends and acquaintances, as for " our own benefit. In vain I endeavoured by every means to reſiſt theſe " opinions—by my converſation—my ſentiments were received ſometimes " with the ſtare of ſurprize, oftener with a ſmile of contempt: if by my " practiſe—I found I muſt relinquiſh all intercourſe with every man of my own " age and rank, for to retain it was impoſſible without conforming to their " caprices or ſuffering their interruptions with complaiſance. Thus do I ut- " terly want all time for ſtudy—and unable to reform and unwilling to aban- " don my friends, I have ſunk into their manners. Theſe I confeſs, I find " ſufficiently agreeable; among my companions I have found much vivacity " and little vice—few ſcholars, but not one dunce—and I believe I ſhould now " be moderately happy, but that I cannot avoid reflecting without remorſe, that " my underſtanding is becoming weak from want of exerciſe, that my morals " are becoming looſe from want of contemplation, and that if I have not yet " deviated from the path of innocence, I ſhall ſoon be unable to extricate my- " ſelf from that of inſignificance, inutility and contempt.

" I am, &c. &c.

" HORTENSIUS."

If the general prevalence of any vicious practice could juſtify it, Horten- ſius would ſtand acquitted—he labours under a malady which more or leſs infects the rich and the poor, the learned and the ignorant, the man of buſineſs and the man of pleaſure. *Want of time* is perhaps more frequently and gene- rally deplored than any other want—yet we muſt admit that time is a com- modity with which we are all amply ſupplied. The truth I believe is, that this want of time proceeds much from its abundance. We are ſo rich in the commodity that we do not know its value—we are therefore prodigal and poor—we throw it away profuſely on worthleſs objects, and when any great or noble occaſion for its expenditure occurs, we find all our reſources pre-occupied and exhauſted.

I much fear that Hortenſius is not ſo ardent a lover of knowledge as he pro- feſſes to be, or that he does not eſtimate time ſo highly as he ought—it would perhaps ſhock him to ſuppoſe that he values his time leſs than his money—yet I much doubt whether, ſocial as he is, he would ſuffer thoſe companions, who plunder him of hours, days and weeks, to command his purſe and laviſh away his eſtate—I much doubt whether he would, even to eſcape ridicule, unite his opulence with their penury, and conſent at once to a community of poſſeſſions, which

which would probably ſoon lead to complete bankruptcy—yet ſurely Hortenſius puts much more to hazard, I ſhould rather ſay to certain deſtruction, when he ſuffers every moment of his life, the whole current caſh of his exiſtence, to be ſeized upon by every ſpendthrift drone, who feeling his own counters to be valueleſs, would readily add them to his guineas, and ſquander the whole in idle and worthleſs purſuits.

Hortenſius's growing reliſh for the life he leads is a bad ſymptom—it beſpeaks a tendency to progreſſion in evil, like that which my correſpondent Ambulator has ſo happily illuſtrated by his winter walk through the ſtreets. If Hortenſius does not immediately exert all the remaining energy of his mind, and call to his aid thoſe ſtudies which he has ſo long and ſo weakly diſcarded, his caſe will be ſoon incurable. He was much to blame to ſubmit at firſt to importunities, which would have ceaſed under reſiſtance, or to have yielded to ridicule, over which fortitude and perſeverance would ſoon have triumphed. Perhaps the privilege which is ſo generally uſurped, of breaking in upon the time of others, ariſes principally from the fewneſs of thoſe who manifeſt that they ſet any value upon their time. If it were generally believed that any man valued his time as much as his other property, I am perſuaded that it would be as much reſpected, and that he would be ſuffered to amaſs intellectual wealth without interruption and without limit. Let Hortenſius reſume his ſtudies, forego his preſent companions, and ſeek refuge from the ſneers of the ignorant, in cloſet intercourſe with the learned and the celebrated. I will warrant that ſo ſoon as it ſhall fully appear that he has been profitably occupied, ſo ſoon as the fruits of well directed ſtudy ſhall attract the notice of men of learning and diſcernment, theſe who are now moſt flippant in their cenſure, will be the loudeſt and moſt forward in their praiſes. In the mean time let him ſeek recreation from ſeverer ſtudies, and prepare his mind for more arduous exerciſes by occaſional correſpondence with the Flapper.

N. S.

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[A Letter Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER XXII.

SATURDAY, APRIL 16, 1796.

——— *Ridiculum acri*
Fortius et melius magnas plerumque ſecat res.

HOR.

— Ridicule ſhall frequently prevail
And cut the knot when graver reaſons fail.

FRANCIS.

TO THE FLAPPER.

" MR. FLAPPER,

" I AM a ſtranger in this city, and ſo have no friends with whom I can " talk over any little matters that intereſt me. I hope then, you, good Sir, " will excuſe my troubling you with this letter on a ſubject about which I " want greatly to get ſome information. You muſt know then, that I am a " young girl who loſt my father and mother when I was only two years old. " Upon their death, an uncle of mine, who had but a very ſmall fortune and " never was married, took me into his care, and bred me up as his own " child. Every body gave him the name of being a good, ſenſible and reli- " gious man, as any in the country where he lived. He went to church " every Sunday regularly, and uſed to ſay he loved going there better than " eating his dinner, and that not for want of a good appetite, I aſſure you, " for he would eat as hearty as any man. He brought me up in the ſame " way of thinking, and took care to give me in every reſpect, what he called " a uſeful and ſound education. It was a ſaying of his that God made " Sunday for our ſouls, and the other days of the week for our bodies, and " that it was very fooliſh as well as very wicked, when we had ſix days to " take care of what would ſoon die, not to give up one to the care of what " muſt live for ever. In this way, I grew ſo uſed to go to church, and read " good books to him on a Sunday, that, young and merry as I was, I felt " vexed and uneaſy, if any thing happened to hinder me from doing the " proper work of the day, as he called it. But, alas! Mr. Flapper, this " good man died a ſhort time ago, and left me in a diſtreſſed ſituation—upon " which my Lady X., who was a diſtant relation of my mother, and had no " children of her own, kindly determined to take me into her family. She " accordingly ſent for me to Lord X.'s houſe in Dublin, and I was very " kindly received there. But you cannot imagine how I was ſurprized and " diverted at the comical hours they kept, for I had never been in town be- " fore in my life. They don't breakfaſt till one or two o'clock, nor dine 'till

" ſeven or eight, and ſcarce ever go to bed before three or four in the morn-
" ing at ſooneſt. Dear me, thought I, it is better to live all one's life quietly
" in the country, than be kept out of bed all night and ſtarving half the
" day like theſe great town folk. But to come, Sir, to the chief buſineſs of
" this letter, you muſt obſerve, I got to town on a Wedneſday, and the Sa-
" turday after, I ventured to ſay to my Lady, 'I ſuppoſe your Ladyſhip will
' breakfaſt early to-morrow.' ' Why ſo?' ſaid ſhe, ' Becauſe of church,
' ma'am,' I anſwered,—' O, my dear, my Lord and I never go to church
' in town. The hours now are ſo late, that it is abſolutely impoſſible to be up
' in time. In the country indeed we uſually go, to ſet a good example to
' our tenants and neighbours.' To be ſure, Mr. Flapper, all this ſeemed very
" ſtrange to me, nor did I know what to ſay or think of it. When I found
" too that my Lady had a large card party every Sunday evening, I own I was
" mightily ſurprized and ſhocked at it, for my dear good uncle, who could
" play a game of cards on a week day as well as another, uſed often to ſay
" that if the great folk, inſtead of playing at cards, and travelling on a Sun-
" day, would go to church, the Sabbath would be better obſerved by all ſorts
" of people, and the world of courſe would be leſs wicked. Now all theſe mat-
" ters bring a thouſand puzzling thoughts into my head, and unleſs you,
" dear Mr. Flapper, will help me with ſome advice and information, I ſhall
" be ſadly at a loſs. Do then, good Sir, write anſwers in ſome of your pa-
" pers, to a few queſtions I am going to put to you. Do all great folk do
" like Lord and Lady X., and if they do, what is the reaſon of it? My
" Lady's woman indeed told me there was a privilege for it, and that Lords
" and Ladies and rich folk were allowed by act of parliament to ſtay from
" church on Sunday morning and play at cards all the evening. But I believe
" ſhe was making game of me, for ſhe was giggling all the time ſhe ſaid it,
" and though ſhe is not much older than I am, is quite another-gueſs crea-
" ture.

" But to come back to my queries—Pray, Sir, is going to church good
" for nothing but to ſet an example? And don't you think it is as neceſſary
" to ſet a good example to trades-people and ſervants in town, as to tenants and
" neighbours in the country? Won't my Lord and Lady X. have a great deal
" to anſwer for in the next world, both on their own accounts, and becauſe
" they hinder their ſervants and myſelf by their late hours from going to
" church of a Sunday? Would it do them any harm if they were to go to
" bed a Saturday earlier than uſual, that they might be up in time for church
" next day? Indeed, Sir, I love Lord and Lady X. very much, for they are
" very good-natured and kind to me, and I ſincerely hope they may be happy
" in this world and in Heaven, but as matters are, I can't help being very
" uneaſy about them. With regard to my Lady indeed, I have heard to be
" ſure, that women have no ſouls, but I don't believe a word of it. I am
" ſure and certain for one, that I have a ſoul. My good uncle told me I had,
" and beſides, Sir, I know myſelf, and feel that I have a ſoul, and that it lives
" in my brain. My Lady X. never reads any thing at all, except newſpapers

" and

" and novels, ſo that if you put this letter in print with your anſwer to it, I am " not afraid of her ſeeing them. Do then, dear, dear Mr. Flapper, let me " hear from you, and you will for ever oblige

" Your's to command,

" SIMPLICIA MEANWELL."

REV. DR. FLAPPER, &c. &c.

" REV. SIR,

" I AM anxious to communicate to your Reverence the earlieſt intelligence " on a ſubject of the greateſt imporance. There is to be no change of the " faſhion of ladies' dreſs or undreſs this ſummer. This you may rely on; as " my information is authentic—from the ſecretary of the meeting held yeſter- " day on the very buſineſs. Perhaps your Reverence does not know that this " whole matter is laid half-yearly before a general meeting of ſuch reps and de- " mireps as have obtained a faſhionable ſettlement in this metropolis. This " ſociety iſſues its orders to milliners, haberdaſhers and mantua-makers, and " they give the law to ſuch perſons as chooſe to call themſelves modeſt " women. Now, Rev. Sir, I am to inform you that yeſterday was the day " of ſettlement for the ſummer half year—and though Miſs Cutadaſh ſwore it " would be a capital rig, after making the women go naked in the winter to " bring warm clothing into faſhion for ſummer, the majority carried it for ex- " poſure, as ſo much more favourable to the trade. Dreſſing the hair A-la- " Guillotine was ſtrictly commanded—with boots and high feathers.

" In return for this information, perhaps I may hope your Reverence will " give inſertion to an advertiſement, offering ſome beautiful dreſſes brought " over by my ſiſter Mrs. Bridget Tarr, to the inſpection of perſons of " faſhion.

" I am, Rev. Sir,

" Your Reverence's moſt obedient,

" And very humble ſervant,

" GEORGE GINGHAM."

" *April* 2, 1796."

ADVERTISEMENT.

Otaheitan Ware-houſe—New Buildings, College-Green.

BRIDGET TARR, (wife of John Tarr who is lately returned from the South Seas) informs her friends and the public, that ſhe has imported by her ſaid huſband a large aſſortment of the neweſt dreſſes now in faſhion, in the iſland of Otaheite. Surprizingly as they muſt appear to agree with the preſent prevailing modes in Ireland, ſhe truſts the curious will ſee in them ſeveral elegant and valuable improvements. John Tarr was particularly careful to deal only with ſuch milliners and mantua-makers as ſerved the court, nobility and principal gentry.

N. B. B. Tarr has juſt received from England a large package of curious elaſtic dreſſes, lined with fleecy hoſiery, and painted of an elegant fleſh colour, which accommodate themſelves to all ſizes and ſhapes, and will be found exceedingly

exceedingly convenient by thoſe ladies whoſe delicate conſtitutions will not allow them to dreſs in the high ſtile of Otaheitan ton.

—— FLAPPER, Eſq. Angleſea-ſtreet.

"SIR,

"As a friend to the literature, I alſo hope you are a friend to the arts of "your country, and that in your wiſhes to encourage the adventurous ſpirit, "and uſeful ingenuity in your countrymen, you will ſuffer your paper to an- "nounce to the public one of the happieſt and moſt uſeful diſcoveries of mo- "dern times; the advantages of which muſt be ſo ſtriking and come ſo "home to the feelings, that I doubt not you will not confine yourſelf merely "to the inſertion of the incloſed advertiſement, but add alſo your own recom- "mendation of the invention to ſociety at large.

"C. X."

ADVERTISEMENT EXTRAORDINARY.

To an enlightened public, who do not think articles of elegant utility unworthy of attention, Bernard Bullion, Goldſmith and Jeweller, Sackville-ſtreet, begs leave to ſtate that, chiefly with a view to an approaching general election in this kingdom, he has prepared, and will have in readineſs, his truly-ſuperior, new-invented royal-patent gold piſtol bullets. In addition to the evident advantages ariſing from their ſuperior weight, poliſh and neatneſs, on which to the amateurs of defence it would be ſuperfluous to enlarge, he would remark, that the general adoption of his patent bullets will tend to confine the elegant and refined practice of duelling to the higher claſſes of ſociety, and exclude the awkwark imitation of inferiors. He truſts alſo it will not be unbecoming in him to ſuggeſt the obvious, and hitherto-unthought-of gallantry of depoſiting in the body of an antagoniſt what will alone be an handſome gratification to the ſurgeon for extracting it.

Wogden's and other piſtols taken meaſure of and fitted in the ſhorteſt notice, and upon terms pleaſingly moderate. The greateſt encouragement given to led-captains and others who may wiſh to buy to ſell again. Fortunate bullets already ſucceſsful to be had at advanced prices in proportion to their efficacy.

X. Y.

DUBLIN:

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[A Letter Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER XXIII.

TUESDAY, APRIL 19, 1796.

Diruit—ædificat—mutat quadrata rotundis.

HOR.

TO THE FLAPPER.

"SIR,

"THE propenſity of the wretched to complain when complaint cannot remove the evil, proves that ſome comfort is to be derived from the mere communication of diſtreſs even where we know aſſiſtance or redreſs cannot be given. It is only on this principle, Mr. Flapper, that I now take the liberty to addreſs you; for though, from the office you have undertaken, you muſt be conſidered as a kind of mental phyſician, I yet have but little hope that even your preſcriptions will remove the malady under which I labour—a malady which habit has made inveterate, and long indulgence interwoven into my conſtitution.

"I am one of thoſe men, Sir, whom the world calls *fickle*—a man of changeful diſpoſition, whoſe verſatility of mind diſqualifies him for the ſteady diſcharge of any virtue as well as for perſeverance in any vice, and yet leaves him capable of performing ſingle acts of the moſt heroic kind, or committing crimes of the deepeſt die. You have already, in your eſſay on forgetfulneſs, depicted a character which at firſt view may appear to fit me, but on a cloſe compariſon of that character with mine I find they are eſſentially different. He was forgetful of the duties of life, the calls of nature and the preſſure of his circumſtances—I remember them all, but to my eye they perpetually vary their appearances: that which yeſterday I thought the dictate of reaſon ſanctioned by religion, ſeems to-day the whim of caprice coloured by the pencil of fancy; and what to-day I conſider as a fixed principle of action ſupported by the voice of nature, and urged by the call of honour or of love, will perhaps before to-morrow ſo far loſe its influence as to be violated with indifference, or rejected with diſguſt.

"This unhappy diſpoſition, Mr. Flapper, is ſo prevalent with me, that it operates in every inſtance whether trivial or important. It does not indeed leave me in any caſe heſitating and irreſolute, but it induces me to act in contrary ways within ſo ſhort an interval of time that to an ordinary obſerver I ſhould not appear at any time to act with a deciſive aim. Such is not the

" caſe; in whatever ſcheme of buſineſs or pleaſure I engage, I am influenced " by a clear and determinate view of its advantages; but the ſcene quickly " ſhifts—the brightneſs of the proſpect gives place to gloom, and thoſe clouds " which, when gilded by ſunſhine, filled my horizon with figures of the moſt " varied and beauteous hue, thicken into darkneſs, and leave me deſtitute of " comfort and even of hope.

" Whether I am to attribute this aptitude to view the ſame object at different " times in different lights, to a greater vivacity of imagination than other men " poſſeſs, or to judgment of leſs ſolidity, I know not. Self-love ſometimes " prompts me to believe the former; but my opinion on this point, as on " others, ſoon changes, and I incline to think the latter is the true cauſe. " However this may be, unqueſtionably the cauſe is coeval with my exiſtence— " it has followed me from infancy to childhood and through childhood to " youth. At ſchool I was diſtinguiſhed not more for the avidity with which I " entered on a new ſtudy, than the ſpeed with which I relinquiſhed it; each " part of my ſchool buſineſs had its turn in my predilection, and each for a " ſhort time enjoyed it to the excluſion of all the reſt.

" When the uſual period of ſchool-diſcipline was at an end, my father left " it to my own choice whether I would enter the univerſity or engage in buſi- " neſs. With my accuſtomed promptneſs I immediately decided—for heſitati- " on and indeciſion were not among my failings. I preferred the honours of " literature to the emoluments of trade, and entered the college with a ſure " hope of eaſily and quickly riſing to the higheſt dignities which learning can " confer, of ſeating myſelf on the throne of ſcience to the excluſion of my " competitors, and of adding immortal fame to the ſeminary in which I had " condeſcended to enroll myſelf. In theſe bright hopes and laudable reſoluti- " ons I continued for an unuſual length of time. I had anſwered my third " examination with *eclat* before I began to ſee that the path of ſcience was not " ſo flowery as I had fancied, or the diſtinctions of learning ſo eaſily acquired " as I had expected. I began to diſcover that to be learned one muſt be re- " cluſe and ſedentary; that to be recluſe would unfit me for ſhining in the gay " world, and that to be ſedentary would be to ſacrifice bodily health, the " greateſt of human bleſſings, to mental excellence. With ſuch a view of " things, of which none, I thought, could deny the juſtneſs, who could blame " an endeavour to change my circumſtances? I therefore applied to my fa- " ther to take me from college and declared myſelf ready to engage in any " buſineſs which he might think eligible. My father, who was an eaſy man, " apt to act by the advice of others becauſe he was too indolent to think for " himſelf, complied with my requeſt, and I was accordingly placed in a mer- " chant's compting-houſe.

" Here I was not indeed to immortalize my name by making new diſcoveries " in ſcience, or adding new graces to literature, but I was to do, what was more " ſubſtantialy uſeful, to grow rich: my mental labours were to be few, and " the rewards of them moſt important—the management of nine arithmetical

" characters

" characters was to ſecure for me wealth and honour. But after a very ſhort " experience this hope loſt its influence. It now occurred to me that the " cautious principles of a merchant's office, and the thrifty habits of a mer- " chant's life were entirely incompatible with that generous nature and thoſe " liberal ſentiments which conſtitute a gentleman; nay, even conſcience as " well as honour took the alarm, for I had read in the *Wiſdom of Sirach* " that ' as the nail ſticketh faſt between the joinings of the ſtones, even ſo ' doth ſin ſtick faſt between buying and ſelling.' In a profeſſion againſt " which I believed both conſcience and honour had objections I would not " remain; but to what could I turn myſelf after repudiating both wealth and " learning? Yes! ſaid I to myſelf, there is one profeſſion more, and in this " I may unite every various advantage of which life is ſuſceptible—I may ſe- " cure health by exerciſe, acquire the manners of a gentleman by frequent " converſe with the world, be at once admired for perſonal accompliſhments, " and honoured for the moſt noble qualities of the mind, generoſity and cou- " rage—the ſword yet remains for me! Smitten with the love of military glo- " ry, the hope of being admired by the women, and reſpected by the men, I " again ſolicited permiſſion of my father to correct my choice of a profeſſion " and was again ſucceſsful. He diſpoſed of the fortune, which he had appro- " priated to me in purchaſing a commiſſion, and in leſs than three months after " I had entered the compting-houſe, I blazed forth the hero of a troop of " horſe.

" In the ecſtacy which new-born dignity is apt to produce, I did think, " Mr. Flapper, that my lot was now fixed; that the reſt of my journey thro' " life would be a perpetual triumph; that I ſhould be converſant with no ob- " jects but a proſtrate foe or a languiſhing lady—and to my honour be it re- " membered that even in this paroxyſm of my glory I determined to be mer- " ciful to the one and kind to the other. But, alas! we have not always an op- " portunity to carry our beſt reſolutions into effect. I had been but a ſhort " time in the army when I found that a ſoldier as well as other men may feel " fear, and that a woman of ſenſe deſpiſes a puppy as much in a red coat as a " coloured one. In a word, Sir, I found that however in the pomp of the " field the miſeries of the barrack may be forgotten, they cannot be eſcaped, " and that the pride and pleaſures of a military life bear the ſame proportion to " its difficulties and diſadvantages as the hours of parade do to the whole of " the day.

" Changing, then, my ideas of the ſoldiers life as I had done with thoſe of " the other ſituations I had tried, I ſold out, and knowing now no other profeſ- " ſion for which I am qualified, I have retired to live with my father, having " brought home with me a wife whom I married from love merely, but " whom I muſt acknowledge to you I now look on with the moſt perfect indif- " ference—ſhall I confeſs that I fear my affections are nearly engaged by ano- " ther woman?

" Such,

" Such, Sir, is an outline of my varied life—were I to relate to you the leſs " important and fantaſtical changes which have marked almoſt my every day, " the recital would to you certainly be ludicrous, but it would to me be a me- " lancholy taſk; for there is not one of them which has not brought with it " an inconvenience or a misfortune. The reſult indeed of this unſettled con- " duct threatens to blaſt the happineſs of my life, and make me not only wretch- " ed but contemptible. Already have I loſt all my friends, for who would be " the friend of him whom kindneſs cannot attach, nor intereſt bind—of him " who to-morrow may ſee cauſe for hatred in the very act which to-day excites " his gratitude? With the loſs of friends I have loſt my property, for to the " expence of new ſchemes daily begun and never ended no private fortune " could be equal. Thus am I, friendleſs and poor, reduced to the neceſſity of " depending on a parent whoſe age, had I been ſteady in my purſuits, I ſhould " have bleſſed with a view of encreaſing wealth and growing fame. I have ex- " hauſted the means of life before life is well begun, and have the mortification " to reflect that my folly is likely to bring wretchedneſs not only on a culpable " individual but on an unoffending family.

" Pray, Mr. Flapper, if there be any remedy for ſo miſchievous a diſorder " communicate it to me and to the public—for believe me there are thouſands " in this city as deeply infected with it as

" Your humble ſervant,

" WILLIAM WEATHERCOCK."

K.

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[A Letter Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER XXIV.

SATURDAY, APRIL 23, 1796.

Decipit exemplar vitiis imitabile.

HORACE.

TO THE FLAPPER.

"SIR,

"ALL error is dangerous, but errors in ethics are peculiarly pernicious; "it is impoſſible to calculate the extenſive deſtruction which may follow "the prevalence of any opinion on the ſubject of human morals, which is at "once popular and vicious, plauſible and abſurd. I was led into this reflec- "tion by the accident of having within a very ſhort time paſt read over "the faſcinating romance of *Tom Jones*, and attended a repreſentation of "that very brilliant comedy, the *School for Scandal*. I am willing to "believe that each of theſe works was compoſed in the ſpirit of an innocent "or a laudable intention, though it is perhaps the exceſs of charity to ſup- "poſe ſuch authors blind to the conſequences of their own productions, or "to extend to ſuperior talents and acuteneſs, the immunities of an apology "which ſeems to be the privilege only of harmleſs imbecility and well mean- "ing indiſcretion.

"In this merciful conſtruction, which ſhields actions by motives, I conſider "the characters of *Bliſil* and *Joſeph Surface* to have been ſketched under the "influence of a merited indignation againſt the deteſtable vice of hypocriſy, "and with an intention to promote the reality of virtue, by deriding and "expoſing the affectation of it. But it is much to be lamented that the means "have defeated the end, and that either from defect in the deſign or miſ- "management in the execution, a conſequence hoſtile to morality has re- "ſulted, and has fruſtrated what ought always to be the object of the fabuliſt "and the dramatiſt. I fear that the event has been to diſcourage ſentiment "even where it is genuine, to bring ſuſpicion upon purity where it is moſt "ſincere, to give confidence to vice where it would have had the decency to "be timid, and where it would not, to applaud effrontery and cheriſh audacity.

"I fear the concluſion which has been drawn by the inaccurate multitude "(and it is for the multitude that plays and novels are compoſed) is, that, in "general, practical and open correctneſs of life preſuppoſes ſecret vice and "certain diſſimulation, while avowed levity and notorious profligacy, of ne-

" ceſſity demonſtrate generoſity of ſoul and goodneſs of diſpoſition; and " indeed, Mr. Flapper, though I have called the multitude inaccurate in this " inference, if you will conſider the premiſes, perhaps you may not think " the deduction very illogical. In each inſtance the hero of the fable is a " youth of ardent paſſions, which it is his merit rather than his misfortune " to call ungovernable. He reſiſts no temptation, he ſolicits every indulgence, " he reſpects no obligation, he violates every duty; all eſtabliſhed decencies " he invades, all eſtabliſhed opinions he derides; the annoyance of others and " the ruin of himſelf are the inevitable conſequences of his conduct, and " when the accumulated weight of both is ready to cruſh the victim of folly " and of ſin, the poetical injuſtice of the author ſnatches his favourite from " deſtruction, and rewards him with wealth, beauty and felicity. Such are " the faults, and ſuch is the fate of this character; what are the merits " *He is brave*, a captivating quality never denied by any author to his hero; " that is, he has courage to aſſert himſelf in all ſituations, and nerves enough " to fight himſelf out of every ſcrape that he has profligacy enough to get into " —*nihil non arrogat armis*—and like Caliſto, 'what he dares to do, he dares ' to juſtify.'

" *He is candid and open:* that is, he defies reprehenſion, he keeps no mea- " ſures with the vulgar ſanction of public opinion, and when the world has " every reaſon to think ill of him, he is too much a man of honour to let " the world be in the wrong. *He is generous and humane:* I give little credit " to that generoſity which rather runs out of a prodigal hand, than flows " from a feeling and well regulated heart; I rate very low that ſpurious " munificence which ſquanders upon a caſual and doubtful object of com- " paſſion, what it denies to the aſcertained and regular claims of juſtice, " and fills the funds of the mendicant with the plunder of the creditor.

" As to humanity, it is amiable, it is delightful. That it ſhould *not* exiſt " in any heart is miraculous; its very name is derived from its congeniality " to the nature of man.

" But how unreaſonable and monſtrous is it to infer that its exiſtence is " a reaſon or an excuſe for the abſence of every other virtue? Indeed if " one were to conſider ſtrictly, humanity is not ſo much a virtue as an in- " dulgence, and perhaps becauſe it is an indulgence, the abuſe of it is to be " found in ſuch characters as I ſpeak of; it acts in ſuch characters abruptly, " indiſcriminately and anomalouſly, and from the current I ſhould ſuſpect " the ſource, and from the conduct I ſhould predicate that the ſentiment was " not genuine; I would almoſt ſay, that ſuch hearts were tender becauſe " they were rotten.

" I do not think I ſhould go too far if I aſſerted that the characters of " *Tom Jones* and *Charles Surface*, are pictures of moral and chriſtian defor- " mity. I do not deny that it is very poſſible, and that it very often happens " that a man of a cold and rigid mind, with ſentiment conſtantly in his " mouth and piety in his demeanour, may in his heart be a deep ſcheming

" flagitious

" flagitious ſcoundrel; and that, on the other hand, the beſt heart and the " pureſt principle may be ſeduced into occaſional deviation from virtue, and " hurried by very amiableneſs of diſpoſition into temporary imprudence. " It would be very abſurd to deny or not to lament this, but what I object " to is the making a rule of the exception, and juſtifying the weak reader " in concluding, that becauſe it may be it muſt be.

" Theſe authors appear to me in this reſpect to have ſinned againſt good " taſte as well as againſt good morals. An author who would repreſent life " as it is, ſhould take care that his fiction pourtrayed character as it gene- " rally, not as it *ſometimes* is to be found; and he would be incorrect (in " more than one ſenſe) if he ſhould authourize his readers to infer a general " propoſition from a particular inſtance. It is the office of the biographer to " detail the peculiarities of an individual, and perhaps it is within the " province of perſonal ſatire and farce-writing to gibbet for public reproba- " tion or ridicule the crimes and abſurdities of a particular offender; this " is the ſcope of ſuch writing, and the harmleſs, and often ſalutary influence, " is no more than that ſuch a man has been. But the noveliſt and dramatiſt " affect a repreſentation of the ſpecies, and ſhould therefore repreſent it as " it is ofteneſt to be found.

" A ſingular character may juſtifiably, if epiſodically, be introduced; " but the author is guilty againſt all the laws of judgment and of ethics, " if the whole body of his work, if his moral (if I may ſo call it) is the la- " bouring of a propoſition radically falſe and widely injurious.

" Now I do not ſuppoſe that any man can be ſo groſsly abſurd as to aſſert " that in the *majority of inſtances* the appearance of virtue is evidence of " the exiſtence of vice, and that the diſplay of crime is notice of the reſi- " dence of virtue. He muſt be devoted to paradox or corroded by miſan- " thropy who would thus invert every moral phænomenon, and infer an " opinion from the very fact which contradicts it. If then this monſtrous " propoſition be not true, and if the above reaſoning be juſt, it follows " (I preſume) that the characters which are the ſubject of this letter have been " either unſkilfully or corruptly drawn, and that the obvious diſtinction be- " tween dramatic probability and poſſibility has been either neglected or " perverted.

" This, I confeſs, might be hypercritical if the object were leſs important, " but it is to no judicious or honeſt man a trifling concern that, in any " popular work, the groſſeſt and moſt pernicious vices are arrayed in a de- " luſive and artificial ſplendour, while the very ſemblance of probity is " branded with ſuſpicion and conducted to diſgrace. Sir, the conſe- " quences of ſuch encouragement to the already too relaxed morality of the " world, it is almoſt impoſſible to calculate. There is a faſhionable cry " againſt every appearance of a moral or ſerious ſentiment, while the prepoſ- " ſeſſion in favour of light and giddy frivolity is equally general and ſtrong.

" I hide

" I hide my bluſhes in this anonymous communication, while I confeſs to " you, Mr. Flapper, that often when my boſom has heaved, or my heart " glowed with ſome honeſt and generous emotion, I have been abaſhed or " deterred from giving it utterance, leſt ſome daſhing Charles or cynical " Sir Peter Teazle ſhould cut me ſhort with a curt and argumentative " *damn your ſentiment.* Nay, I have been almoſt tempted to join in ſuch " vile and ſenſeleſs cant myſelf; but I call upon you, Sir, in your cenſorial " capacity, as a chriſtian and a moraliſt, to admoniſh and undeceive all, but " eſpecially your younger readers on this important ſubject; exhort them " againſt the falſe ſhame which would tempt them to ſacrifice their beſt feel- " ings and principles, and through the dread of an imputed hypocriſy to be " guilty of that worſt ſpecies of diſſimulation, the affectation of being worſe " than they are. Caution them againſt the treacherous ſplendour of any cha- " racter which dazzles, becauſe it is unſteady; aſſure them that general " worth can never be made up of individual faults, and that ever ſo many " items of private vice will not form the aggregate of an amiable or reſpec- " table man; reaſon with the adverſary opinion, and ſuggeſt that a mere " inchoate good ſentiment in the heart or on the lips of the accuſed ſhould " not be received as concluſive evidence of his duplicity and hypocriſy, " unleſs the treaſon be evinced by the proof of ſome overt-act to ſubſtantiate " it. Your experience will enable you to comfort ſome young gentlemen " and enlighten ſome young ladies, by the information, that it is even poſſible " to be a *man of honour* without having ever committed adultery, fought a " duel, or ruined a tradeſman. I can aſſure you, Sir, that I have known very " great raſcals who were almoſt as immoral as *Charles Surface*, ſo little are " appearances to be truſted to, and that the pleaſanteſt, as well as the beſt " man, and (I will borrow a faſhionable phraſe) *the fineſt fellow* I ever knew, " was a gentleman who paid his debts and ſaid his prayers.

" CATO."

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[A Letter Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER XXV.

TUESDAY, APRIL 26, 1796.

Time travels in divers paces with divers perſons: I'll tell you who time ambles withal, who time trots withal, who time gallops withal, and who he ſtands ſtill withal.

SHAKESPEARE.

IT is the privilege and the delight of ſuperior talents to wander occaſionally into the regions of refined ſpeculation. It is their exerciſe and recreation in the intervals of retirement from the buſtle, the cares and the fatigues of life. Yet even in theſe hours of relaxation, talents may be uſefully employed: and genius and taſte, amidſt the novelties that ſurround them in theſe unexplored tracts, ſhould be attentive to ſelect and preſerve whatever may enrich or decorate the world to which they are to return.

Theſe thoughts are ſuggeſted by a "diſquiſition on the nature of time," which accidentally preſented itſelf to me among the works of Soame Jenyns, an author peculiarly fond of ſuch intellectual rambles as I have mentioned. In the eſſay alluded to, I find the following propoſition: "Certain it is, "that time, abſtracted from the thoughts, actions and motions which paſs "in it, is actually *nothing*: it is only the mode in which ſome created beings "are ordained to exiſt; but in itſelf has really no exiſtence at all." Hence the ingenious author draws ſeveral inferences, one of which is in theſe words: "This being the caſe, it follows that the life of every man muſt be longer "or ſhorter in proportion to the number of his thoughts and actions; for "if it was poſſible for a man to think and act as much in an hour as in a "year, that hour, as far as related to him, would not only ſeem, but ac-"tually become a year." The ſame thought is elegantly expreſſed in the Spectator, No. 316. "The time we live ought not to be computed by "the number of years, but by the uſe that has been made of it; thus, it "is not the extent of ground but the yearly rent which gives the value to "the eſtate." In truth the ſentiment itſelf is by no means new; yet ſome uſeful practical deductions, not wholly deſtitute of novelty, may, I think, be drawn from it.

If it be true that the life of every man is to be meaſured by the uſe which he makes of time, and is proportioned to the number of his thoughts and actions, he who labours to encreaſe his ſtock of thought or to extend his ſphere of action, is thereby in fact laying in and ſecuring to himſelf longevity: and on the other hand, the ſpendthrift of time is as ſurely the ſhortener

of his own days; and not the leſs a ſuicide becauſe the poiſon which he has choſen is not ſudden in its operation. Our habit of eſtimating time, according to the common meaſure of days and years, may give this poſition the air of a paradox; and yet there are expreſſions in common uſe among us, which imply an admiſſion of its truth; we are accuſtomed, almoſt unawares, to attribute the characteriſticks of old age, not to length of days, but to an abundant and well employed ſtock of ideas; and youth is a word uſed often to expreſs intellectual as well as corporeal non-age.

If we were to purſue this idea further, and ſuppoſe that a new meaſure of time were to be eſtabliſhed by legiſlative authority, by which the exiſtence of each man ſhould be declared commenſurate in length with the train of ideas that had paſſed in his mind—it is curious to think what ſeemingly preposterous effects would be produced. We might ſee, for inſtance, younger brothers ejecting their elders by right of ſeniority, and the aged ſon diſinheriting his ſtripling parent. Little miſs of fifty-five would perhaps be ſent to the nurſery by her ſtaid niece of thirteen for ſcolding at cards; and mamma might be obliged to ſolicit her daughter to *chaperon* her at the drawing room. The blood of faſhion, who ſleeps 'till two o'clock, the modiſh dawn, and from thence 'till ſun-ſet, the period of the modiſh morning, ſhakes the ſtreets with his phaeton, or mocks the humble toil of the ſcavenger with his horſes heels,—how ſtrangely ſurprized would he be to find his pantaloons ſwell out to trowſers, and himſelf aſtride on a hobby horſe, or forced "with ſatchel on his back to trudge along unwillingly to ſchool." What an influx of buſineſs to Chancery would be produced by ſuch a law, in the crowds of ancient and grey headed infants whom it would place under the guardianſhip of that court! Yet, in this apparent confuſion, order would in reality prevail: the diligent, the active and the conſiderate, whatever might be their years, would occupy the higheſt ranks of ſociety; length of days indeed, if it had been devoted to good purpoſes, would be held in ten-fold veneration; but the longeſt life, if waſted in idleneſs or proſtituted to vice, would inſtantly ſhrink into the ſhortneſs and inſignificance of childhood.

This new menſuration of time, it is obvious, would induce a neceſſity for a change in the conſtruction of our almanacks; but as the old meaſure by days and months and years might ſtill be found to anſwer ſeveral uſeful purpoſes, and as indeed it would be impoſſible to form one on the new ſyſtem which would be univerſally applicable, I think it not neceſſary to ſuggeſt any other improvement than the following: Let there be in every page of the calendar, a blank column, in which each individual may regiſter, from day to day, the variations in the progreſs of his mental time. That day, for example, would appear amongſt the longeſt, which had been employed in the acquiſition of uſeful knowledge, or the exerciſe of honeſt induſtry; that which had been

been waſted in idleneſs or diſſipation would rank among the ſhorteſt. Whatever day had been conſecrated by any act of charity, of benevolence or public ſpirit, I would have marked with red letters as a feſtival: of that which had been occupied in vicious or diſhonourable practiſes, the murky progreſs ſhould be denoted by *total eclipſe*. An ingenious almanack-compiler in our ſiſter kingdom gives his readers a column of weekly prognoſtics of the weather, to the immenſe advantage, no doubt, of all who can be induced to give credit to the friendly warning. Upon a plan ſomewhat ſimilar might the variations in the intellectual atmoſphere be regiſtered. The ſtate of mind of the termagant, *Furioſa*, might be deſcribed, "ſtormy, ſucceeded by "heavy ſhowers;" that of the ſoaker, *Bibulus*, "perpetual fog, and noiſome "damps." The morning which *Philander* ſpent in the compoſition of a ſonnet to a courteſan of quality was "hot, ſultry and oppreſſive;" during the week which *Pylades* paſſed in viſiting and relieving his poorer tenantry, the weather was "invariably ſerene, with brilliant ſunſhine."

The idea on which I have been enlarging, of meaſuring our time by the acquiſition or application of uſeful knowledge, was fully entered into, although ſomewhat whimſically, by an old acquaintance of mine who was church-warden of a pariſh in the country where I reſided for ſeveral years. I had occaſion once to reſort to the pariſh regiſtry which was in his cuſtody; and obſerving, in the liſt of mortalities, ſome entries cloſely written in my friend's hand, I obtained his permiſſion to read and afterwards to tranſcribe ſome of them. I had proceeded far in this paper before I recollected the occurrence; but having had the good fortune to find my extract amongſt an heap of old papers, I cannot deny myſelf the pleaſure of communicating it to my readers.

Regiſter of Mortality in the Pariſh of ———.

"*Mrs. Tabitha Trump*, aged fifty-nine years *O. S.* This lady's youth "was paſſed in reading novels: the buſineſs of her age was ſcandal, and "its amuſement cards. She was carried to the grave in great pomp, twelve "maidens in virgin white ſtrewing flowers before the corpſe. She died of a "revoke, after having *lived* exactly four years, three months and twenty-one "days, being older than her favourite cat two months and nine days."

"*Barnaby Bumper, Eſq;* in the forty-ſeventh year of his *exiſtence*. Drowned "in a punch-bowl at a beef-ſteak club, in the twenty-third year of his *life*. "The caſe of this gentleman was remarkable. By his early attention to his "ſtudies, he arrived at maturity long before he came of age. But at that "period having become repreſentative for the county, he ceaſed to advance "and ſcarcely reached twenty-one till near his death; when having been appointed to prepare a road-bill, he applied himſelf ſo diligently to it, that he "lived full fifteen months in leſs than ſo many days."

"*Peter*

" *Peter Plod*, fifty-four years, ſix months and three days. While he dwelt in " this city was always eſteemed a good man—upon change—wore a brown " drab coat and bob wig. Never miſſed an appointment—ſmoked much " tobacco, ate, drank and ſlept. Was ſuppoſed by his friends to have *lived* " two hours thirty-ſeven minutes each week day for many years, without a " ſingle exception—on Sundays certainly *lived* four hours, going to church " morning and evening. Intellect at par in the forenoon, but fell conſider- " ably after dinner. *Plod* came into the pariſh, having realized a plum, at " fifty-four *phyſical age*—became childiſh in ſix months and three days."

" *Tom Trifle* exiſted thirty-ſeven years—died ſtill born."

But I muſt quit my friend the church-warden, and conclude this paper with an obſervation addreſſed to the fair ſex. That charming claſs of readers, whoſe ſmiles I am moſt anxious to deſerve, may perhaps revolt from my ſyſtem, as implying an abridgement of youth with all its bloom and all its gaiety, and an acceleration of old age and gravity and wrinkles—I haſten to remove the error. The growth of the body is not neceſſarily connected with that of the mind; an youthful frame may be tenanted by an aged underſtanding. There is an expreſſion of intelligence in *Iſabella*'s eye, that tells me, before ſhe ſpeaks, how much more mature her mind is than the elegant manſion it inhabits. The vacancy of *Myrtilla*'s ſtare, not leſs than the loud emptineſs of her converſation, proves that with a full grown perſon ſhe has a mind ſcarcely out of leading-ſtrings. Let my fair friends be aſſured that the mental old age which I recommend, ſo far from being prejudicial, is capable of ſetting off and adorning the graces of exterior youth.

A.

DUBLIN:

Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.

[Price, Two Pence.]

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[A Letter Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER XXVI.

SATURDAY, APRIL 30, 1796.

Ingenioſa gula.

PATERCULUS.

Ingenious gluttony.

THERE is not perhaps in the hiſtory of man a more remarkable circumſtance than his having forced his neceſſities into the ſervice of his vanity, and deduced from the former means to adminiſter to the gratification of the latter; houſes originally deſigned merely for the purpoſes of comfort and convenience are only deemed habitations fit for the lower orders of people, unleſs they are adapted to the diſplay of oſtentation. The ever varying caprices of faſhion have ſprung from the neceſſity of clothing the body to fence it againſt cold, and all the elaborate luxuries of the table have been grafted on that of taking the ſimple meal which is needful for ſuſtenance. A ſpirit of improvement gradually unfolding itſelf with the progreſs of time would not in any-wiſe be a ſubject of cenſure or reprehenſion, had it remained ſubject to the dictates of reaſon and within the limits of moderation; but whatever exceeds theſe proves inevitably prejudicial to individual happineſs, and in its conſequences detrimental to that of ſociety.

The wants of man in his natural ſtate were few and eaſily ſupplied; temperance enſured to him health, ſpirits and longevity; in that which is falſely ſtyled his ſtate of refinement, his wants are ever multiplying and never fully gratified, and to his irrational purſuits, conſtitution, peace of mind, and life, too frequently fall ſacrifices. Homer deſcribed his heroes as men of good appetite but no great proficients in culinary art; lovers of beef broiled upon the coals, which was generally cooked by themſelves and ſerved up without nicety: what a contraſt does this plainneſs exhibit when compared with the falſe delicacy and ingenious gluttony aſcribed to Apicius in the motto prefixed to this paper? At that period the Roman inordinacy in eating had

ariſen to a ſhameful pitch, but their notions of what conſtituted good living now appear to have been formed upon a wrong ſcale; clumſy peacocks, boars roaſted whole, and fiſh of enormous ſize would at preſent excite diſguſt, but were then in the liſt of dainties; the products of the garden, the farm and the dairy were reckoned mean fare, and whatever was extravagant in price and got with moſt difficulty was moſt highly eſteemed; ſea-fiſh, becauſe brought from a conſiderable diſtance, was particularly prized; Lucullus was at the trouble of having a mountain perforated to form a reſervoir in order to have a ſupply of them for his table always at hand; the moſt coſtly ingredients were laviſhed in their ſauces, and the ſtipend of a ſkilful cook amounted to a ſum ſcarcely to be credited; ſatiety alone could reſult from ſuch banquets, nor could undepraved taſte reliſh them, an ambition of diſplaying ſuperior wealth alone gave riſe to the monſtrous extravagance, and cuſtom forced the palate to acquieſce contrary to its natural diſlike. The groſs and ponderous ſtile of our own old-faſhioned entertainments evinces an inferior degree of this ſpecies of oſtentation; myriads of harmleſs animals were abridged of their little day and immolated to the pride of keeping a table "where all "was more than hoſpitably good," from which the gorged gueſts tottered off to ſuffer the horrors of digeſtion, and often became victims of that variety of diſtempers to which intemperance never fails to give birth. But this clumſy inelegance is now exploded, the eyes of the genteel world are no longer annoyed by the high piled board, the ample chine has yielded the pas to the ragout, and the high flavoured paſty given place to the fricandeau. Slight courſes of viands in maſquerade are alone admiſſible; and ſuch now is the exiſting rage for French cookery, that a gentleman, upon finding a bill of fare his wife had written, actually miſtook it for the muſter-roll of a company in one of the emigrant corps. Our deſſerts and ſuppers too are improved by admitting an unbounded latitude in fine diſguiſes; ſhepherdeſſes in painted dough, temples in ſpun ſugar, and witty ſentences encloſed in baked paſte; nay, ſome elegant perſons refine ſtill further, and inſtead of fruits and confections produce china figures and artificial flowers. A plain country friend of mine who was accidentally tranſplanted to one of our faſhionable dinners, humouroufly compared himſelf to the poor fellow at the Bermecides feaſt, (mentioned in the Arabian Nights Entertainments) where he was tantalized with

with the names of fine things he could not taſte, and ſtarving with hunger whilſt invited to partake of rareties. Thus, from the extreme of ſenſeleſs plenty, our meals are dwindled to fantaſtic kickſhaws; yet theſe are but different modifications of the ſame folly. Shew appears to be the object, and vanity the governing principle throughout. Could this folly be confined to the ſphere in which the opulent move, it would not (however ridiculous) be permanently hurtful: but when from the contagion of example it deſcends to perſons of narrow or precarious income, it becomes very dangerous in its tendency; many a fair-intentioned trader has been reduced to bankruptcy, many a hopeful young family driven to beggary, becauſe the miſtreſs of a houſe piqued herſelf upon giving handſome dinners and ſuppers. Nor is this inordinacy confined to the city; it daily ſpreads wider and wider, and even in remote parts of the country at the tables of ſnug farmers, the turkey and bacon have broken through their ancient ſocial compact, and now occupy two diſhes inſtead of one. Reaſoning on ſuch a ſubject would with reſpect to thoſe who moſt need it be leaſt perſuaſive, but to a dread of perſonal ſuffering all are awake; and this latter conſideration alone ought to teach us a prudent moderation both in the quantity and quality of the meals we take. Lewis Cornaro has often been mentioned to prove the ſalutary effects of temperance; and to the honour of our own time, another adept in this branch of ethics has lately left us the benefit of his example. This latter was the Cardinal de Salis, Archbiſhop of Seville, where he died Anno 1786, aged one hundred and ten years, eight months and fourteen days, in the full enjoyment of his rational faculties after a healthful life. When ſolicited to diſcloſe what ſort of regimen he obſerved, he anſwered, "I accuſtomed myſelf when young to live as if I were old, and now that I am really old I find myſelf young—my diet was ſparing, and I indulged not in exceſs of wine—I led a ſober and ſtudious, but not a lazy or ſedentary life—ſo far I took care for the body, and as for the mind I endeavoured to preſerve it in due temper by a ſcrupulous obſervance of the divine commands, and keeping a conſcience void of offence towards God or man—by theſe innocent means I have arrived at the age of a Patriarch with leſs injury to my health and conſtitution than many experience at forty, and I am now like the ripe corn, ready for the ſickle of death."

How

How exalted a proſpect does an exiſtence thus employed afford to the contemplative mind! what a ſpirit of emulation ſhould it excite! what a laudable ambition awaken!—Iſocrates was perhaps too ſevere when he called pride and folly the inſeparable companions of wealth: but doubtleſs Heaven beſtows it for better ends than the gratification of vanity or caprice. Did the oſtentatious entertainer only conſider that his practice generally defeats his favourite purpoſe, it were ſufficient to arouſe him to a proper ſenſe of the ſpecies of bounty by which he might acquire real dignity; were he to think how often his profuſe feaſt is ſpread for ſuperiors who conſider him as honoured by their acceptance; equals, who inſenſible to ſocial attachment, traffic in hoſpitality; or paraſytes, who flatter his follies to live by them, his pride would go over to the ſide of his reaſon, and lead him to a better regulated diſtribution of the property entruſted to his management by providence.

G.

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The Flapper.

NUMBER XXVII.

TUESDAY, MAY 3, 1796.

Et Genus et Proavos.

OVID.

Each ſlip from off the genealogick tree
Of *Flap*—and all his wooden pedigree.

THE inſignia of office are ſcarcely leſs ancient than the offices to which they belong. In the heathen mythology, a ſyſtem of ſufficiently remote antiquity, we find the gods all furniſhed with ſymbols of their rank, from the wand of Mercury to the thunderbolt of Jove. And indeed, if theſe imaginary powers owe their exiſtence to allegory and hieroglyphick, it ſeems to follow that their ſtaffs of office ſhould be coeval with themſelves. To that of Hermes—a malicious critick may compare the ſtick and bladder, which form the ſimple enſign of flapperian dignity; alluding ſlyly to the drowſy qualities of the Caduceus, and the thefts or plagiaries imputed to him who bore it;—but (not to mention the type of eternity with which it was ſurrounded) I could cite the authority of Horace, to ſhew that this gold-ſtick, in waiting upon Jove, had power to rouze from ſlumber as well as to produce it; and poſſeſſed a ſtill higher privilege, which the Flapper would exult to claim, that of averting the human ſoul from the gloomy abodes of vice, and uſhering it to the happineſs which attends on virtue.

To deſcend from deities to men, we find princes in virtue of their ſtation carry ſceptres; of which they appear to have ſometimes made an uſe reſembling that to which the Flapper's ſtaff is applied. For I would remind the ſaucy critick whom my fancy has conjured up, that when Therſites indulged in an arrogant cenſure of his ſuperiors, he received a flap from the diſcreet ſceptre of Ulyſſes which reſtored his recollection on the ſpot; tranſferring the inflammatory ſymptoms from his intellect to his back; where the ſwell of envious diſcontent aſſumed the viſible ſhape of a ſubſtantial bump.

The baton or truncheon appears to be only a variety of the ſceptre; of which indeed I conſider it as the "rude forefather," inaſmuch as I look on generals to have been the rudiment of kings. Thus the Croſier on the other hand is a modification of the peaceful crook; an allegory, repreſenting the paſtoral nature of the epiſcopal function. But be theſe inſignia connected, or diſtinct, they ſuggeſt the univerſality of official ſymbols like the flap.

I am fearful of alluding to thoſe more bulky implements which belong to a certain complex functionary, who boaſts as many mouths as rumour, and perhaps opens them not leſs frequently, though whoever prefers ſolid pudding to empty praiſe muſt admit that they are opened to much better purpoſe. I ſay it is not without ſcruple that I ſuggeſt any analogy between my ſlighter wand and the more ponderous inſignia of a corporation; leſt a literary mace-bearer, become familiar with the idea of the flapping apparatus, ſhould confound the functions of his inſtrument and mine, and incautiouſly apply the former to the pate of a lord mayor to cure his drowſineſs on the morning after a city feaſt. This would be a more perilous miſtake than that of the aſs, who almoſt trampled his unfortunate maſter to death in attempting to imitate the careſſes of his lap-dog.

Paſſing lately through a country town in aſſizes time, I had the curioſity to go into court, and was much ſtruck with the efficacy of a flap or wand, which was held by a man whom they called *crier*, and who by touching the *occiput* of a boor who was puſhing forward into a place that did not ſuit him, immediately reſtored him to his recollection. I remarked indeed that the operator began by nimbly removing his patient's wig; and beſides applied the ſpecific ſomewhat roughly. But this I attributed to his want of ſkill and experience; the art of flapping having as yet riſen to no maturity in this country. In the infancy of that uſeful practice, inoculation, we know what a ſevere gaſh it was thought neceſſary to give; whereas now it is found ſufficient merely to raiſe the ſkin. For my part, as I am reſolved never to lift my ſtaff except in defence of virtue, decorum or good ſenſe, and withal, to apply it as gently as the caſe will bear, my lawyer tells me that I may plead *molliter manus impoſuit*, (I uſe his own technical term which merely means that the touch was innoxious) to any attack that is made on me in the courts; where, by the way, in every Tipſtaff, I ſhould hope, if there be ſuch a thing as *eſprit de corps*, to meet a friend.

I ſhould do ill to ſet an example of vanity to my readers, by declining to notice a poor relation of our family, commonly known by the title of

Merry

Merry Andrew. Between his ſtaff of office and mine there is ſome reſemblance, and though I cannot commend his vulgar manners and coarſe buffoonery, I admire his pleaſantry, and ſhall not lament, if there ſhould be found occaſionally in my papers a vein which will ſtrengthen the preſumption of our being related. As to the gridiron, which forms part of his *inſignia*, and which he carries on his back, I know not how to account better for it than by ſuppoſing that at ſome remote period he was flapper to a corporation. I can only aſſure the reader that he had no hand in my paper upon pancakes; though I admit that he is with many known by the appellation of Jack Pudding.

Before this time, in conjecturing the pedigree of my flap, (whoſe genealogical tree was amongſt the nobleſt of Dodona) the rod of the magician may have occurred to the reader; and in fact my ſtaff of office does claim kindred with this latter.

Perhaps indeed, it is not extravagant to aſſert, that it migrates through the qualities of many rods which I have mentioned: now, like the wand of Hermes, it gives that repoſe to dulneſs which it does not ſcruple to remove from taſte; or, in the ſame capacity, conducts its followers in the way of happineſs and truth.

Pias lætis animas reponit
Sedibus; virgâque levem coercet
Aureâ Turbam.

From paths of vice the warning Flapper's rod
Recalls, and points to virtue's bright abode.

Again, like the ſceptre of Ulyſſes, it checks the ſallies of the empty and preſumptuous: at ſome times it aſſumes the province of the truncheon; marſhalling arguments that ſhall combat with immorality and error; at others it is transformed to a crook, and ranges the fields in company with Coverley, Will Wimble and the Spectator. The rod of the wizard—*qui modo Thebis—modo ponit Athenis*—it will occaſionally be for the reader's entertainment, conjuring up ſcenes and phantoms that may pleaſe the imagination and correct the heart.

TO THE FLAPPER.

"SIR,

"Some mornings ago happening to caſt my eye on one of *Martial*'s epi-
"grams, a few lines occurred to me, which I know not whether to call tranſ-

lation

" lation or imitation. I take the liberty of encloſing them to you; and if " at any time you ſhould happen to have a vacant corner in your paper, I " ſhould account myſelf honoured by your inſerting them. They are only " worth attention as they ſerve to ſhew that the ſocial intercourſe in ancient " Rome was clogged with the ſame inconveniencies as exiſt amongſt our- " ſelves at this day.

" I am, Sir, your's, &c.

MART. EPIGR. *Lib.* II, 5.

Ne valeam, ſi non totis, Deciane, *diebus*
Et tecum totis noctibus eſſe velim.
Sed duo ſunt quæ nos diſtinguunt millia paſſûm;
Quatuor hæc fiunt cum rediturus eam.
Sæpe domi non es; cum ſis quoque, ſæpe negaris,
Vel tantum cauſis, vel tibi ſæpe vacas.
Te tamen ut videam duo millia non piget ire;
Ut te non videam, quatuor ire piget.

Hang me, dear *Decian*, if I don't delight
To ſit and chat with you both day and night;
But you reſide from me two miles or more,
And two miles back again, you know, make four—
Then when I call you're often not within,
And often when you are, you'll not be ſeen:
Or if your clients ſee you, you're denied
By orders ſtrict to all the world beſide—
Two miles to ſee you I ſhould deem no evil,
But *four* miles, *not to ſee you* is—the Devil.

P. L.

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Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.

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[A Letter Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER XXVIII.

SATURDAY, MAY 7, 1796.

Vox faucibus hæſit.

VIRGIL.

In ſpite of all their fruitleſs pains,
The murm'ring brogue its place maintains.

TO THE FLAPPER.

"SIR,

"IT is a favourite notion with me that he who is not vain will ſeldom "be ridiculous; ſo far as the latter term involves the idea of contempt. I "ſuſpect that what moſt commonly expoſes men to ridicule is the ſtepping "beyond their ſphere, and attempting to ſhine in ways not ſuited to their "talents, habits or ſituation; an attempt to which, clearly, it is vanity "that prompts. It is true that circumſtances, in whoſe production this "paſſion has had no ſhare, may often excite our riſible muſcles—and that "powerfully. For example, when the other day at dinner I gravely called "to the ſervant for a pen and ink, (which were not half ſo fit for cutting "my meat, as the knife and fork that I intended aſking for) there was a "hearty laugh, at which I was not mortified; for it was the occurrence "which was comical, not I that was abſurd—I had only been guilty of a "momentary fit of abſence; and the laugh which I excited was not ſhar-"pened by contempt.

"Some years ago I ſpent a froſty Chriſtmas moſt agreeably with a friend "in Glouceſterſhire; in the midſt of thoſe 'high, wild hills, and rough, "uneven ways,' which Shakeſpeare has deſcribed; and ſurrounded (within "doors) by caſement windows clothed with ſaints, ſentences and eſcutcheons—

" thick walls, pointed doors, and paſſages (which led to nothing) any more " than *this*, or many that are met with in modern writings. Here farmer " Holbert uſed to viſit us in an evening, and be ſeated in a corner with a " ſmall table and can of punch before him. His uſual errand was to " conſult the Squire on difficulties which he got into by ' *putting on*' too " ſoon, or not ' *taking off*' in due time, conformably to the laconic order, " given by the wooden poſts on the way-ſide. But when this important " buſineſs was diſpatched, he would ſay a hundred things which, from " their naivetè, ruffled the tranquillity of my features, without diminiſhing " my reſpect for the honeſt farmer. He would extoll the valour of the " Welch for defending their territory ſo long from the Engliſh; *when*, he " ſaid, *the land that he ſaw in Wales was not worth three-pence an acre.* " We talked of the remains of an old encampment in the neighbourhood, " about the origin of which antiquarians doubted, namely, whether it was " Roman or Britiſh. ' *Laud! Sir*, (ſays the farmer) ' *my wife has a hiſtory* ' *book as tells a deal about that there camp. If I know'd as you liked it—* ' *I'd have brought him. They ſay as it was built by Oliver Cromwell or* ' *Julius Cæſar, or about that time. Well! Sir, I know'd as you'd laugh;* ' *but I can't be pticlar indeed.*' Now, Mr. Flapper, I felt this ſally to be " ludicrous; but I ſaw nothing deſpicable in the ſimple farmer's good na- " tured attempt to communicate to us the treaſures of his hiſtory book.

" It is affectation that provokes (and juſtly) our ridicule and contempt; " and I for my part know few affectations more diſguſting than thoſe diſ- " cordant ſounds which the polite vulgar of our country miſtake for a re- " ſemblance of Engliſh accent. One of theſe poliſhed gentlemen will inform " you that ' he went to the *Pleey* to hear Miſs Poole; but that he was too *leet* ' and could not get a *ſate*;" and this he will tell you in a nimble alternation " of ſcream and growl, ſomething between the braying of an aſs and the " jerk of a Scotch bag-pipe. Would it not (to adopt his own barbariſms) " be a *gree-dale* better to let himſelf alone than have his organs of ſpeech " waging this eternal inteſtine war?

Naturam expellas furcâ licet, uſque recurret.

" To what end ſqueeze and torture the unlucky *A*, if the whole extent " of brogue is to be transferred to the vowel *E*? more eſpecially ſince this " change leaves him as remote at leaſt from Engliſh accent as he was be- " fore; and at the ſame time provokes our contempt by its affectation. " Then that jerking of his voice at every ſecond word is a ſtill more un-

" fortunate

" fortunate imitation. The Engliſh recitative moves uniformly and on a " greater ſcale—it embraces a whole ſentence, and does not conſiſt in a " convulſive tranſition from low to high, a kind of ſolitary duet—that " makes the performer come within Stephanos's deſcription of the Savage " Caliban, as being ' a moſt *ridiculous* monſter with *two voices*.'

" Let me earneſtly recommend to my dear countrymen (Mr. Flapper) " either to ſubdue their brogue entirely, which if poſſible ſhould be done, " or let it take its clumſy courſe; or (to give a counſel more adapted to the " ſubject of this letter) let me adviſe them cautiouſly to avoid a ſpecies of " affectation which is very ludicrous and contemptible.

" The miſchiefs of a ſhort viſit to England many of my acquaintances " have never recovered. Poor Will Special! He was ſent acroſs the Channel " by his maſter, an eminent attorney, to witneſs a deed; and though he was " abſent but three weeks, he never will be the ſame man again. I met him " ſhortly after his landing,—' my dear Edmond,' ſays he, (my name is " Thomas, Mr. Flapper) ' I am *ravi de joye* at ſeeing you—all our friends— ' eh! well aye—you look monſtrous well—charmingly.' (Indeed, Mr. " Flapper, I was fooliſh enough to be deceived at firſt with this, notwith- " ſtanding all his affectation, and to apprehend I had quite thrown off the " effects of that rheumatic complaint which had confined me ſo long) ' Oh, ' my deareſt friend—had you been with me in London, Richard, my time ' would have paſſed the moſt *delightfulleſt* poſſible—but how is your daugh- ' ter?' my ſiſter I ſuppoſe you mean, ſaid I—' Oh! yes, your ſiſter—ſhe's ' a monſtrous fine girl,—but London is the place for fine women.—Oh! you ' can have no notion of London, James, no not you.—Every thing here ' in this *bore* place is ſo ſhabby and ſo flat after it,'—(he had been at this " time about ten minutes on ſhore, I do aſſure you, Sir,) ' London and Bath ' for my money, and old Ireland to old Nick.' After this ſentiment, Mr. " Flapper, I left him immediately, and though I know he has forced him- " ſelf into ſome notice by the faſhions which he receives monthly from the " tailor at whoſe houſe he lodged, and the lies he retails of his travels, " I have ever ſince ſtudiouſly avoided him. The ladies ſay he is *monſtrouſly* " improved, but I always thought it a bad ſign in a man of buſineſs to dwell " continually on curricles and ſtage-players; and I am ſure his affected " modes of cockney expreſſion, what we may call the pluſquam ſuperlative " ſtile, the *moſt charmingeſt* and *moſt prodigious-fineſt*, are as foreign from " good ſenſe as from good grammar.

" I will

" I will cloſe my illuſtration of the principle with which I have ſet out " by ſhewing the reader how abſurd Monſieur *Girardin* appears by his " vain and unneceſſary attempt to make a figure in Engliſh poeſy. Among " the inſcriptions with which he has decorated *Ermenonville*, are the follow- " ing, of his own compoſition.

' Shower make 'em both get under the hill, or grove;
' There they no thunder hear; but only the ſweet love.'

" And on a ſtone erected in honour of Shenſtone:

' This *Plain*-ſtone
' To William *Shen*-ſtone:
' In his verſes he diſplay'd
' His mind natural:
' At Leaſowes he laid
' Arcadian greens rural.'

" Leſt the reader ſhould be puzzled to find the proſody of the laſt lines, " I beg here to divide the ſyllables, and give the words with their proper " accents:

' At Le—a—ſow—es he laid
' Ārcădĭăn grēēns rŭrāl.'

" Theſe, Sir, are my ſentiments (given without much order or arrange- " ment) to which, if you think them worth publiſhing, you are welcome.

" I remain, Sir,
" Your conſtant reader,
P. " THOMAS PLAINLY."

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The Flapper.

NUMBER XXIX.

TUESDAY, MAY 10, 1796.

La gentilhommerie nous tient les bras liés.

MOLIERE'S GEORGE DANDIN.

Marry a gentlewoman and your hands are tied up.

TO THE FLAPPER.

" OH! Mr. Flapper, I am a miſerable being, and, unleſs ſucceſsfully " aſſiſted by you, muſt ſpeedily fall into utter ruin! I was bred to the genteel " and beneficial trade of woman's taylor, and for fitting a riding-habit, ſo " as exactly to hit the taſte of my fair employers, I had not my equal. Nay, " ſuch is my dexterity that I have contrived to make even the preſent faſhion, " clumſey as it is, in ſome degree becoming. Under my hands the ſhoulders " taper into a waiſt, and the ſuſpicious prominence before, together with the " ungainly bulk behind, both of them diſappear, or ſink into Hogarth's line " of beauty. This ſingular talent, joined to decent behaviour, perfect punctua- " lity, and a little more honeſty than my fellows in the trade, had raiſed me " to a competent proviſion, and I was accounted among my neighbours in " every ſenſe, a good man.

" But, alas! wealth, though ſo greedily deſired, often leads to misfortune! " Elated with proſperity, and, by the intercourſe of my occupation, uſed ſome- " times to the company of my betters, nothing would ſerve me but that I " muſt fall in love with a young lady of faſhion—not much in love neither, " for ſhe was exceedingly plain, if not ugly; nor was ſhe very young, for " her age approached to forty; nor much of faſhion, for her father had been " a lottery-office keeper, who however, having made money, purchaſed land, " and bought into parliament, was received into the genteeleſt company,— " her mother alſo, though ſhe had been very low, was now proportionally " high. But this curſed wealth of mine, which was, as uſual, over-rated, " and a generous, but fooliſh offer to take her without a portion, ſo allured " the covetous father, that, taylor as I was, he gave her to me in marriage; " and, though the lady frowned a little upon my calling, and was not ena- " moured with my perſon, yet, being paſt the age of aſpiring hope, ſhe liked " well enough my reputed wealth, and, without much ſeeming reluctance, con- " ſented to obey the commands of dear papa. The mother indeed, an oſtler's

" daughter, was averſe to the match, and thought the girl ſadly demeaned " herſelf—married however we were, and the honey-moon paſſed as uſual. " But, alas! the moon changed, and with it fled my felicity.

" For the firſt few weeks my dear ſpouſe was tolerably patient, and con- " tented herſelf with giving very expenſive matrimonial dinners of two " courſes and a deſert, from which however her neighbours were excluded. " But now ſhe began to long for former amuſements—cards of invitation, " which had ornamented and crowded the chimney piece of the lottery man's " daughter, ſcarcely ever bleſſed the eyes of the taylor's wife. To remedy " this inſupportable neglect nothing ſo ſure as to give a ball. One's friends " forget one, if not ſometimes reminded, and they, whom we invite, muſt " invite again. To this excellent expedient I for ſome time demurred; but, " ſpite of all my incomparable arguments, I was at length compelled to yield, " and the ball was determined on.

" From this moment all went topſy turvy within doors—my houſe un- " derwent a total transformation—bed chambers were turned into tea and " card rooms, and I was ſcarcely left a cloſet to ſleep in—all that could " write in the family were perpetually employed in penning invitations, " and every ſervant, apprentice and journeyman, in carrying them about " —cooks were collected from all quarters, and my houſe ſo ſtunk of the " kitchen that was it ſcarcely poſſible to endure it—all the chairs and tables " of the neighbourhood were put *into requiſition*, and every room was " crammed with lumber. At length the happy night arrived, and even I " was glad of it, as I wiſhed to get rid of the preparations—the con- " fectioner's boxes were ſafely ſtowed, and every thing promiſed a mag- " nificent ſupper—but much was yet to be gone through!

" The company arrived in ſhoals, moſt of them, no doubt, predetermined " to laugh at their entertainers—my door was almoſt beat down by inceſſant " knocking, and the noiſe of a review in the park was nothing to that which " bewildered my poor head. The muſick ſtruck up, and the ball began, but " ſuch was the crowd that dancing was converted into ſqueezing and joſtling— " my own ſervants not being ſufficiently numerous, a hot preſs had taken " place through the whole neighbourhood (this however my wife aſſured " me was the caſe in the genteeleſt balls); but, as our recruits had not " been properly drilled to the ſervice, a ſad confuſion enſued—a black- " ſmith's foreman, an excellent workman at his trade, in handing about " the lemonade and ices, and by main force labouring and puſhing through " the throng, unluckily let the ſalver fall, and utterly ſpoiled the gowns " of two or three fine ladies. The ſame misfortune repeatedly happened " at ſupper, and ſcarce a male or female that did not get more of the ſoups " than they deſired,—the ladies were accordingly much out of humour, " ſcarcely abſtaining from abuſe againſt their hoſt and hoſteſs, and the men " revenged themſelves by getting drunk, rioting, breaking the furniture and " beating the ſervants. The newly enliſted corps were not however ſuffi-

" ciently

" ciently trained to paſſive obedience, and the blackſmith's foreman had the " misfortune to knock down a very fine gentleman—an univerſal hubbub " enſued, and a conſequent panick among the ladies, who at five o'clock put " an end to the ball by their abrupt departure, and the male gueſts, having " broke my glaſſes, ruined my carpets, and done every other miſchief they " could, were at laſt, thanks to my exhauſted cellar! quietly carried away, " leaving their hoſt in deſpair, and their hoſteſs in fits.

" It will readily be conceived that this unfortunate, though very coſtly " expedient was not productive of the deſired effect. The taylor's ball was " indeed for ſome days the ſubject of malicious laughter, and my poor wife, " after all her vexation and my expenſe, ſtill remained uninvited, and with " leſs chance than ever of obtaining the darling wiſh of her heart. Some " familiar friends however ſhe had, and excellent ones they were! to whoſe " private parties ſhe was conſtantly aſked, where ſhe made herſelf truly wel- " come by perpetually loſing at guinea caſino. If playing for half guineas " puts a woman upon a level with a ſquire's wife, guineas muſt exalt her at leaſt " to the rank of a baronet's lady—but it would have been better and cheaper for " me to have purchaſed the title!—Her expenſes are enormous—her milliner's " bills frightful—her ſervants cheat as they pleaſe, and my caſh is daily ſink- " ing! No ſupply neither! for ſhe has affronted all my neighbouring and " beſt paying cuſtomers, and my workmen are dreſſed in liveries to walk be- " fore her chair—indeed they have little elſe to do!—Her temper alſo is " grown intollerable, and her pride encreaſes in proportion as ſhe ſpends my " money!

" But lately ſhe has taken a new freak into her head, which, if complied " with, would infallibly complete my ruin. The bad hours ſhe keeps, for " I am uſually in bed before ſhe goes out, and ſhe ſeldom comes home 'till " I am riſing, joined to the perpetual fretting at cards, have reduced her to " ſkin and bone. This leanneſs ſhe chooſes to aſcribe to the bad air of Bride- " ſtreet, and morning, noon and night, whenever I chance to have the honour " of ſeeing her, torments me to purchaſe a houſe in Mountjoy-ſquare.

" This ſtrange propoſal, a compliance with which muſt, for various reaſons, " at once undo me, I manfully withſtood, 'till yeſterday, in an evil hour, ſhe " brought her mother down upon me.—Heavens, what a ſcene! Never did I " behold ſuch a virago! ' Are you not content, Sir, with degrading my ' daughter to *your* contemptible level, but will you be her death too? do you ' not ſee her condition? Poor ſoul, faſt falling into a decline! And will you keep ' her in this unwholeſome blackguard hole? this ſink of vulgarity, naſtineſs and ' bad air! Will you be my child's murderer? ſuch I ſhall ever eſteem you—yes, ' her murderer, Sir!'—And when I modeſtly mentioned the ſad decay of my " fortune and of my buſineſs, which, if I left my ſtanding, muſt be irretriev- " ably loſt.—' I am glad of it,' exclaimed ſhe—' better loſt than continued ' —it is unreputable, and an odious ſtain upon my family! A taylor's wife in-

" deed!"

‘ deed!’ And, her paſſion here getting the better of her gentility, ſhe joined “ her two thumb-nails with a naſty, and to me moſt contemptuous action and “ noiſe.—‘ Why you vulgar fellow, my huſband, this dear girl’s father, is a ‘ Parliament-man—and what are you—O! patience, patience!’—Thus ſhe “ ran on with a rapidity and vociferation that kept me mute; and though I “ have not yet conſented, the effect of ſuch another attack will moſt certainly “ be fatal to me; for my wife was all the while in hyſterics, and I am a “ good natured man.—In ſhort I am on the brink of ruin, and, if advice “ from you ſhould fail of effect, for ſhe takes in the Flapper as a genteel “ thing, you will ſoon ſee on the liſt of bankrupts

“ Your moſt miſerable,

“ And moſt humble ſervant,

“ JEREMY THIMBLE.”

“ Take care to aſſure my wife that
“ the air of Bride-ſtreet is by far
“ the wholeſomeſt in Dublin.

Advice to Mrs. Thimble would, I doubt, be thrown away, and I ſhall therefore content myſelf with informing her of my opinion that a wife muſt ſhare in the ruin of her huſband, and that, when he ſhall become a bankrupt, papa, and even mama, will be apt to look coldly upon her. So far alſo will I comply with my correſpondent’s requeſt as to aſſure her that, for the cure of her malady, the air of Bride-ſtreet is excellent—provided ſhe changes it as ſeldom as poſſible for that of the ſuburbs, which is undoubtedly much too refined and penetrating for her conſtitution.

N.

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The Flapper.

NUMBER XXX.

SATURDAY, MAY 14, 1796.

AMIDST the ſportive varieties of the faſhionable world, and the more awful viciſſitudes of the political, it is matter of conſolation to perceive that the radical characters of human nature ſtill remain the ſame—that common ſenſe, though like the great luminary in the Heavens, occaſionally obſcured by paſſing clouds, is by no means extinguiſhed—and that the real majority of ſociety taſte and feel, and reliſh and prefer pretty nearly as they did in leſs queſtionable times.

Amongſt many other obvious marks of undeclining humanity, there is one which I always think of with peculiar pleaſure—I mean the reception which the poems of the excellent *Cowper* have met with from all claſſes of readers.—His two volumes, which were firſt publiſhed about fourteen years ago, have paſſed already through at leaſt ſeven editions; and while love for the man mingles in every inſtance with admiration of the poet, even republicaniſm itſelf ſeems to relax from its wonted ſternneſs at the mention of that well known act of munificence by which his preſent Majeſty has done equal honour to Mr. *Cowper* and to himſelf.

To point out the reaſons why poetry pleaſes--to analyze its characters—and to ſhew that its laws are founded on the nature of things—theſe form the appropriate taſk of the profeſſor of polite literature. But common experience is ſufficient to prove that the gratification ariſing from poetry is not limited to the knowledge of its principles; and if we obſerve attentively, we ſhall probably find that even amongſt common readers the degree of the pleaſure bears a near proportion to the merit of the performance; at leaſt it will appear that where poetry is really excellent, it never fails more or leſs to intereſt the human mind, except in caſes of abſolute inſenſibility.

At the ſame time it muſt be allowed, that ſome ſpecies of poetic compoſition may be much better calculated than others to obtain general acceptance. For inſtance, it can hardly be ſuppoſed that the *Paradiſe Loſt* of *Milton*, tranſcendent as it is, ſhould be as popular as the *Seaſons* of *Thomſon*. In the former, the grandeur of the ſubject, the loftineſs of the conceptions, the profuſion both of claſſical and ſcientific learning, together with that tranſpoſition of language, it might almoſt be ſaid, that Latinized Engliſh which obtains throughout the whole of the poem, keep the unlettered reader at an awful diſtance, and preclude that degree of familiarity which is eſſential to enjoyment. *Thomſon* on the contrary though elegant, is acceſſible; though he thinks with the wiſe, he ſpeaks a language intelligible even to the vulgar; he deſcribes for the moſt part what the village ſwain has contemplated in common with the philoſopher; and he expreſſes feelings which every well-formed mind has experienced, though it may not always be able to clothe them in ſuitable

language: He paints with juſtneſs of deſign and in the moſt glowing colours, from originals generally known and generally intereſting; and becauſe all can judge of the likeneſs, all derive pleaſure from the performance.

To ſimilar cauſes we may attribute the popularity of *Cowper*; he too, perhaps in as high a degree as any man who ever lived, is the poet of nature; led by his excurſive muſe through many a mazy path, he returns to the ſcenes, which nature herſelf has formed, with ever new delight; from theſe he takes the darling ſubjects of his poetic pencil; and though in his hands they ſeem to diſplay new beauties and appear more intereſting, they loſe nothing of their familiarity: His deſcriptions ſtrike every mind which is endued with the common powers of diſcernment; his thoughts meet ſomething in uniſon with themſelves in every heart that is human.

I believe I need not ſcruple to aſſert that in the power of giving univerſal gratification, *Cowper* very much exceeds even *Thomſon* himſelf. *Thomſon* undoubtedly deſcribes what every man may ſee, and what indeed almoſt every man has ſeen at one time or other; but *Cowper* deſcribes what every man *muſt* ſee; he takes his materials from the every-day walks of life; he ſeizes on thoſe little domeſtic circumſtances, which perhaps no poet before him ever thought of making uſe of; and he forms from them pictures which aſtoniſh no leſs than they pleaſe. We wonder at the intereſt we now for the firſt time take in what we have ſo often ſeen without any pleaſurable ſenſation; and we wonder ſtill more that ſuch an effect ſhould be ſo eaſily produced; we obſerve no labour, no ſearch for ornament, but on the contrary an execution as artleſs as the conception is vigorous. In this perhaps alſo *Cowper* has a material advantage over *Thomſon*; the latter leaves no circumſtance unexpreſſed, no grace neglected, no aid of colouring omitted—all is beautiful, but all is elaborate. *Cowper*, on the contrary, looks out for nothing, he takes juſt ſo much as has made an impreſſion on his own mind, and which will of courſe produce the ſame effect on the mind of his reader; and having completed his deſign with a few maſterly ſtrokes, he hurries on to ſome new ſubject. The deſcriptions of *Thomſon* are like the moſt highly finiſhed paintings of the Flemiſh-ſchool; thoſe of *Cowper* are little more than ſketches, but they are the ſketches of a *Raphael*.

Let it not be thought that I wiſh to depreciate by an invidious compariſon the admirable author of the *Seaſons*: His pure gold could not be tarniſhed by the breath of malevolence, nor on the other hand, has it any thing to apprehend from the aſſay of candid criticiſm. But the excellence of Cowper has no need of being illuſtrated by contraſt—to know him is to admire him. In particular, it is impoſſible to look into his invaluable *Taſk* (the work in which he has given the moſt unbounded licenſe to his fancy) without being charmed even to tranſport at the wildly beautiful varieties, of vivid deſcription and glowing thought, of images the graveſt and the gayeſt, the moſt humourous and the moſt pathetic, the moſt obvious in ſubſtance, and in manner the moſt novel, which following each other in rapid ſucceſſion, would almoſt beſpeak a magic creation, like that of the airy phantoms in the cave of *Proſpero*.

The limits which I have aſſigned myſelf would almoſt forbid my indulging in quotation, were it not neceſſary to ſupport by a few inſtances what might otherwiſe appear to thoſe who are but ſlightly acquainted with *Cowper*'s poetry, a fanciful panegyric. I tranſcribe the following deſcription of the coming in of the poſt in a winter afternoon, not becauſe it is the moſt beautiful I could find, but becauſe it is the firſt paſſage which happens to occur, and being the exordium of a book, its meaning is independent of any thing preceding.

Hark!

Hark! 'tis the twanging horn! on yonder bridge,
That with its wearifome but uſeful length
Beſtrides the wintry flood, in which the moon
Sees her unwrinkled face reflected bright,
He comes, the herald of a noiſy world,
With ſpatter'd boots, ſtrapp'd waiſt and frozen locks,
News from all nations lumbring at his back.
True to his charge, the cloſe pack'd load behind,
Yet careleſs what he brings, his one concern
Is to conduct it to the deſtin'd inn,
And having dropp'd th' expected bag—paſs on.
He whiſtles as he goes, light hearted wretch,
Cold and yet chearful; meſſenger of grief
Perhaps to thouſands, and of joy to ſome,
To him indifferent whether grief or joy.
Houſes in aſhes, and the fall of ſtocks,
Births, deaths, and marriages, epiſtles wet
With tears that trickled down the writers cheeks,
Faſt as the periods from his fluent quill,
Or charg'd with am'rous ſighs of abſent ſwains,
Or nymphs reſponſive, equally affect
His horſe and him, unconſcious of them all.

The lovely domeſtic picture which follows almoſt immediately, and which introduces a moſt whimſical, yet moſt literally juſt deſcription of a news-paper, is too long to be wholly tranſcribed, and yet too beautiful to be entirely omitted; the part which I ſhall give will perhaps excite a wiſh to read the remainder, and then my purpoſe will be anſwered.

Now ſtir the fire, and cloſe the ſhutters faſt,
Let fall the curtains, wheel the ſofa round,
And while the bubbling and loud hiſſing urn
Sends up a ſteamy column, and the cups
Which chear but not inebriate, wait on each,
So let us welcome peaceful evening in.
Not ſuch his evening, who with ſhining face
Sweats in the crowded theatre, and ſqueez'd
And bored with elbow points through both his ſides,
Out-ſcolds the ranting actor on the ſtage.
Nor his, who patient ſtands till his feet throb,
And his head thumps, to feed upon the breath
Of patriots burſting with heroic rage,
Or placemen, all tranquillity and ſmiles.
This folio of four pages, happy work!
Which not ev'n critics criticiſe; that holds
Inquiſitive attention, while I read,
Faſt bound in chains of ſilence, which the fair
Tho' eloquent themſelves, yet fear to break;
What is it but a maſs of buſy life,
Its fluctuations and its vaſt concerns?
Here runs the mountainous and craggy ridge
That tempts ambition, &c.
— — — —
Here rills of oily eloquence in ſoft
Meanders, lubricate the courſe they take.
— — — —
Cataracts of declamation thunder here,
There foreſts of no meaning ſpread the page.
— — — —
The reſt appears a wilderneſs of ſtrange
But gay confuſion, roſes for the cheeks,
And lilies for the brows of faded age,
Teeth for the toothleſs, ringlets for the bald,
Heav'n, earth and ocean plunder'd of their ſweets,
Nectareous eſſences, Olympian dews,
Sermons, and city feaſts, and fav'rite airs,
— — — —
And Katterfelto, with his hair on end
At his own wonders, wond'ring for his bread.

The

The diſcerning reader will eaſily perceive that ſimplicity is a prevailing character in the poetry of *Cowper*, and that his thoughts appear to retain on paper the very order and ſhape which they aſſumed at firſt in his mind. One conſequence of this certainly is that his verſes are unequal, and that many of his lines, if they ſtood alone, or were fraught with leſs noble matter, could not be conſidered as more than proſe which had fallen by accident into a metrical form. In ſuch caſes *Cowper* ſeems never once to have thought of ſtopping to correct or improve. He was too powerfully attracted by the objects that lay before him; perhaps alſo he conſidered the occaſional occurrence of verſes comparatively flat, as advantageous on the whole, and that the remark of Horace,

Opere in longo fas eſt obrepere ſomnum.

implied a precept as well as a permiſſion.

Another conſequence of *Cowper*'s writing preciſely as he thought, is a total dereliction of all method. This might ſeem at firſt ſight to be the very thing which he intended; but on a cloſer view he appears frequently to have formed ſome previous plan from which the fervidneſs of his mind carries him away, and he wanders on through a wilderneſs indeed, but like that of Eden "a wilderneſs of ſweets," over which the fancy of his reader delights to follow him. He deſcribes this verſatile turn in his own happy manner, in a paſſage with which for the preſent I ſhall conclude, requeſting only the permiſſion of my readers to reſume this ſubject (which I acknowledge to be a favourite one) at ſome future opportunity.

After deſcribing in a vein of poignant humour "the world's time as "time in maſquerade"—

His pinions fledg'd
With motley plumes,

tinctured black and red with card ſpots, furniſhed with a dice-box in lieu of an hour-glaſs, and a billiard mace as a ſubſtitute for his ſcythe; and having touched on the modern education of young miſſes, who at the age,

"their mothers wore
The backſtring and the bib, aſſume the dreſs
Of womanhood, ſit pupils in the ſchool
Of card card-devoted time, and night by night,
Plac'd at ſome vacant corner of the board,
Learn ev'ry trick—

He proceeds,

But truce with cenſure. Roving as I rove
Where ſhall I find an end or how proceed?
As he that travels far, oft turns aſide
To view ſome rugged rock or mould'ring tower,
Which ſeen delights him not; then coming home,
Deſcribes and prints, it that the world may know
How far he went for what was nothing worth;
So I, with bruſh in hand and pallet ſpread
With colours mix'd for a far different uſe,
Paint cards and dolls, and every idle thing
That fancy finds in her excurſive flights.

L.

DUBLIN:
Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.
[Price, Two Pence.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER XXXI.

TUESDAY, MAY 17, 1796.

Hic unde vitam ſumeret inſcius
Pacem Duello *miſcuit.*
HORACE.

Not knowing whence the rules of life to trace,
The DUELLIST diſturbs the public peace.

WRITING as I do for the improvement of the public manners, I cannot overlook a practice, which claims protection as the moſt effectual means of diffuſing true politeneſs through the upper orders of ſociety, though it cannot, at leaſt in my humble apprehenſion, ſupport this claim by any juſt pretenſions. This *rival Flapper*, which I am deſirous of depreciating, is the practice of *duelling*; and I entreat my courteous readers to be aſſured that I am not on this occaſion influenced by any ſordid deſign of monopolizing the reformation of public manners, but inſtigated ſolely by that pure regard for the good of the community, which ſo often prompts the patriotic venders of patent medicines to caution their cuſtomers againſt *counterfeits*.

The practice of duelling has been treated by grave and ſevere moral writers with a degree of aſperity very repugnant to that poliſhed behaviour, which this gentle art profeſſes to promote. Without making any allowance for the delicate feelings of a fine gentleman and man of honour, they rudely charge the duelliſt with the guilt of ſuicide in expoſing his own life, and that of murder in attempting the life of his antagoniſt. The imputation of ſuicide cannot indeed be very offenſive to him, as an incident of that kind is attended by ſome *eclat* in the faſhionable world; but to be claſſed with every deſperate ruffian in low life is quite intolerable. As I am in part a profeſſor of politeneſs, I will not attempt this uncourtly method of diſcuſſion, but will treat my rival with all the civility in my power; and as it is an eſtabliſhed principle of good breeding not to introduce any topic, of which the perſon with whom you converſe muſt be preſumed to be ignorant, I will not ſay one word on the ſubject of virtue or of religion.

Politeneſs I conceive comprizes all thoſe modes of external behaviour which are underſtood to indicate a diſpoſition to be agreeable to others. Such a quality muſt conſiderably augment the happineſs of ſocial intercourſe, and every thing which poſſeſſes this tendency is worthy of our regard. The in-

 trinſic

trinſic benevolence of the mind is undoubtedly of principal value; but among creatures who cannot avoid being in a greater or leſs degree affected by external circumſtances, the happy art of giving expreſſion to latent benignity, and *bodying forth the form* of a diſpoſition, which might otherwiſe remain unknown, is deſerving of much attention.

That this art ſhould be moſt eaſily and ſucceſsfully communicated by an apprehenſion of violence muſt ſeem to an unprejudiced perſon altogether unaccountable. The attending to the feelings of others leſt the ſudden ebullition of offended pride might fall upon the incautious violator of the laws of decorum, may be the means of peace in a ferocious community; but I am not able to conceive how the conſtrained and artificial manners occaſioned by this *ſyſtem of terror* in private life, can be regarded as politeneſs. The full efficacy of this ſyſtem of transferring into our ſocial intercourſe the *forced benevolences* of tyrannical governments could produce nothing but hypocritical grimace diſguſting to the rational mind.

As I was walking a few days ago through College-green muſing on the ſubject of this paper, my attention was attracted by a croud, on mixing with which I beheld what at once occurred to me on this plan as the finiſhed model of modern politeneſs. A little dog fantaſtically dreſſed was dancing for the amuſement of the populace. He, like the man of *duel-taught* politeneſs, felt no pleaſure in contributing to the gratification of thoſe around him, but urged by a recollection of the painful conſequences of former failures, he bowed and capered, while the vacant crowd admired his poliſhed manners. It is however, doing an act of injuſtice to the dog to compare him to the man whoſe manners have been ſuperinduced by ſelfiſhneſs and apprehenſion. The dog exhibited faithfully and without evaſion the geſtures which his maſter's rod had taught him; but the practiſed man of the world can eaſily find a ſubterfuge, by which, without offending againſt the letter of the laws of honour, he may violate thoſe of real politeneſs, and diſplay a diſpoſition hoſtile and contemptuous. Shakeſpeare's clown has humouroufly enumerated the gradations of theſe evaſions. "The firſt, the retort courteous; the ſecond, the quip modeſt; the third, the reply churliſh; the fourth, the reproof valiant; the fifth, the countercheck quarrelſome; the ſixth, the lie with circumſtance; the ſeventh, the lie direct. All theſe you may avoid but the lie direct; and you may avoid that too with an *if*. —Your *if* is the only peace-maker; much virtue in *if*."

The laws of honour then, as they are called, were they capable of complete enforcement, could produce only an affected exterior, which could never ſatisfy the friend of true politeneſs; and beſides are, more than any other laws, ſubject to evaſion. The modes of behaviour, by which we may communicate our friendly or unfriendly ſentiments are innumerable, and their diſtinctions evaneſcent. Settled rules cannot adjuſt their fleeting and ever-varying forms; and if they could, yet benevolent ſentiment, of which politeneſs is but the language, cannot be compelled.

It

It would probably be thought paradoxical to maintain that the Ruſſians in the reign of Peter the Great were in regard to manners the moſt refined people of Europe; and yet I imagine it may be made evident on this plan of compulſory politeneſs. The ſeveral gradations of rank were aſcertained among them, not by the vague and fluctuating ſtandard of faſhion, but by the rigid accuracy of imperial regulations. *Your reſpectable birth, your high reſpectable birth, your eminence, your high eminence, your brilliancy and your high brilliancy*, were the nicely diſcriminated modes of addreſs among that poliſhed nation; and by the laws of the Great Peter the offended *boyar* or grandee was authorized to chaſtize *by a beating* the rude neglect of this ſcale of civility. The advantages of this ſyſtem, compared to that of duelling, are great and numerous. The violations of politeneſs are here ſtrictly defined, and the law of the ſtate enforces the penalty of each. The *knout* or the *great knout* inexorably chaſtizes the offender according to the degree of his tranſgreſſion, and he ſees no hope of eſcape in the weakneſs of the nerves or the ſtrength of the ſcruples of the man whom he has injured, or in the chance of a piſtol-ſhot. As much then as the regulated judicial power of a community is preferable to the inſecure independence of a ſtate of nature, (in which every man is very conveniently judge in his own cauſe, but unluckily unſupported in the execution of the ſentence) ſo much does the Ruſſian ſyſtem of enforcing politeneſs by the *knout* appear preferable to ours of exacting it by the *piſtol*.

It is a matter of curious ſpeculation to trace this practice to its origin, and to enquire whether we can at its ſource diſcover any connection between it and the current of modern politeneſs. It has been thought ſufficient to ſay that it is a relique of the romantic ſpirit of chivalry, which urged the gallant knight to valourous atchievements in the patient hope that years of toil and danger might at length be crowned by the bright reward of his Dulcinea's ſmile; but this account does not ſeem to me ſatisfactory. Mr. Mitford, in the admirable firſt volume of his Grecian Hiſtory, has juſtly obſerved, that Theſeus and Hercules were knights-errant of an earlier age. Similar evils in ages remote from each other called forth ſimilar exertions of the bold and generous for their removal, though the ſuperior reſpect which our Gothic anceſtors cheriſhed for the ladies, and a whimſical mixture of the ſuperſtition of the time gave their amorous propenſities a peculiar tendency. Inſtead of rudely carrying off the objects of their affections, like the knights of antiquity, they with minds ſubdued by abſtinence, and bodies chaſtened by hardſhip, refined their paſſions to the ſublimity of platonic veneration. With this incidental difference the ſame ſpirit of gallant enterprize for the protection of peaceable individuals amidſt the inſecurity of imperfect governments, was exerted in thoſe rude times, which preceded the bright æra of Grecian glory, and in the barbarous period, which cruſhed the ſcience and politics and civilization of weſtern Europe; and as we cannot diſcover in the latter ages of the Greeks any traces of the practice of duelling, derived from the knight-errantry of their heroic age, we may conclude that neither had it any direct or immediate connection with that ſpirit in the latter inſtance.

A more

A more attentive inquiry will probably ſuggeſt to the modern duelliſt a genealogy of his favourite ſyſtem much leſs flattering. It is acknowledged that it did not prevail among the civilized nations of Europe before that period, in which the barbarians of the North broke through the feeble barrier of the Roman empire, and with the violence of ſavage conqueſt chaſtiſed the corruptions of an exhauſted government. But neither can it be diſcovered in the original manners of thoſe fierce invaders. I have looked for it in the maſterly ſketches which Tacitus has given us of the antient Germans, but could only find that thoſe barbarians, whoſe coarſe and ſimple manners his magic pencil has taught the refined and civilized to contemplate with reſpect, were apt to quarrel and fight in the hour of intoxication. This extemporary valour is very remote from the modern practice of duelling, according to which the offence is indeed frequently given in a ſtate of drunkenneſs, but the combat performed with all the punctilios of the moſt perfect ſobriety. Beſides it ſeems more probable that this German uſage was the proto-type of that collective and tumultuary heroiſm, which in modern frolics has broken windows, inſulted innocent paſſengers and murdered watchmen, rather than of that ceremonious and deliberate hoſtility of two perſons, which is ſuppoſed to conduce ſo powerfully to polite manners.

If then we cannot find the practice of duelling either among the civilized nations who were ſubdued, or among the barbarians who ſubdued them, we muſt conſider it as the reſult of their combination; as the chymiſt frequently diſcovers properties in a mixture different from thoſe poſſeſſed by any of the ingredients. The ſavages of the North, few in number when compared to the nations which they had vanquiſhed, were ſuddenly exalted to the rank and pride of independent chieftains. Looſed by extent of conqueſt from that civil union, by which even their wild and wandering tribes had been connected, and looking down with contempt on the ſpiritleſs ſlaves who had ſhrunk from their invaſion, each barbarian aſſerted by arms every right which paſſion prompted him to claim, and which in the general diſorder of the times the powers of government were too feeble to regulate. Hence in the firſt imperfect re-eſtabliſhment of ſocial order aroſe the *Judicial Combat;* and hence, though in the improvement of a more enlightened period we have laid aſide the notion of an appeal to providence, the modern *duel.* Thus traced to its origin, this great inſtrument of politeneſs, this boaſted refinement of delicate and honourable feeling, appears to have been only THE TRIUMPH OF BARBARISM OVER THE RUINS OF CIVILIZATION.

E.

DUBLIN:

Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.

[Price, Two Pence.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER XXXII.

SATURDAY, MAY 21, 1796.

Poſſeſs ye therefore, ye who, borne about
In chariots and ſedans, know no fatigue
But that of idleneſs, and taſte no ſcenes
But ſuch as art contrives, poſſeſs ye ſtill
Your element. COWPER.

TO THE FLAPPER.

" MR. FLAPPER,

" ABOUT a fortnight ago I arrived for the firſt time in this metropolis; " and having heretofore paſt my life in the ſociety a quiet country neigh- " bourhood afforded, I felt much diffidence, and doubt of being capable of " adapting my plain manners to the refined taſte of the circle in which I was " now about to move. In this exigence I applied for advice to a relation of " mine, the relict of Sir Solomon Quizz, citizen and knight; a lady who during " a Summer ſpent at my father's houſe in the country gave us to underſtand " ſhe was one of the great world, by inceſſantly talking of etiquette, and " the true *ſçavoir vivre;* and ſupported her accidental rank with all imagi- " nable dignity.

" Lady Quizz ſeemed not a little gratified with this appeal to her ſuperior " judgment—ſaid ſhe liked lads that ſhewed a deſire of improvement—wiſhed " I had a phæton—was ſorry I had not come in time to ſubſcribe to the " Private Theatre—cautioned me againſt going to the promenade becauſe it " was vulgar, and the play-houſe becauſe it would be ungenteel until Banniſter " ſhould come over, and requeſted me to keep none but the beſt company— " people of a *certain rank*, who live with eclat. In the ſimplicity of my " heart I could not help regretting that the only amuſements acceſſible to " ſtrangers were thus laid under an interdict; and I lamented that the ſhort- " neſs of my ſtay in town would prevent me from ſeeing faſhionable players, " or forming any acquaintance with thoſe genteel people who alone were " worth knowing. But her ladyſhip had the goodneſs to eaſe my apprehen- " ſions on this latter ſcore, by telling me the ceremonious forms of intro- " duction were in many caſes diſpenſed with by the polite world; and that " if I would comb the powder carefully out of my hair—crop my head as

" cloſe as poſſible, and parade the *pavè* on horſeback every day on thoſe " hours in which the ſtreets were moſt crowded, ſhe would take upon her- " ſelf to get me into a proper line of company. To the laſt of theſe articles " I chearfully aſſented, being habitually a bold rider from having followed " the fox-hounds ever ſince I was able to ſit on horſeback, nor did I object " to the former ones, as I never conſidered a total non-conformity to the " faſhion in dreſs a proof of good ſenſe: and feeling myſelf really obliged " to her ladyſhip for entering thus warmly into my intereſts, I expreſſed my " thanks, and told her I was certain my father would be proud to acknow- " ledge her kindneſs; but ſhe ſtopt me ſhort, by entreating I would in fu- " ture, when I found it neceſſary to mention my father, call him Mr. Ivy, " as it was now reckoned quite outré to recognize relationſhips. This I muſt " own, Mr. Flapper, did ſurprize me, as the very week before I came up from " the North her ladyſhip had actually ſtyled my father *dear couſin*, in a letter " of thanks for a preſent of veniſon which he ſent her by the ſtage-coach.

" The friendſhip of Lady Quizz was not confined to mere verbal profeſ- " ſions, for the very next day I received from her a ſlip of card, on which " was written, Mrs. Mouldy, May 2d. and dated February 3d. It is likely " I ſhould have been at a loſs what to make of this, had not her ladyſhip " taken the trouble of encloſing it in a billet from herſelf, informing me the " card would be my paſſport to a *ſelect* fete at the houſe of a lady, who, " though untitled, was of *the firſt world*, having a large fortune and being " of a very ancient family. This laſt circumſtance I thought it would have " been better not to have touched upon; for her ladyſhip's own pedigree " is none of the longeſt—her father was a gentleman, but her grandfather, " (who between you and me, Mr. Flapper, brought the family to opulence) " had the misfortune of being a ſoap-boiler.

" Well, Sir, to this ball (for it was a ball) I went, and with ſome emo- " tion heard my name announced where it was utterly unknown; but to my " ſingular comfort I found that no perſon took notice of me—the rooms were " crowded in ſuch a manner that whole groups were cruſhed together, " inſomuch, that nothing but heads were viſible, and even from theſe " all marks of diſtinction ſeemed to have been ſtudiouſly obliterated—Indeed " were it not that theſe of the ladies were bandaged up as if broken, they " might be miſtaken for thoſe of the beaux. You may conceive my amaze- " ment on ſurveying this throng.—' How extenſive, thought I, muſt be the ' connections of Mrs. Mouldy if all theſe are only her *ſelect* acquaintance!' " I did not at that time know, Mr. Flapper, that it was neceſſary on ſuch " occaſions to collect a crowd any how, and that for this purpoſe ladies gave " out tickets of invitation to be diſtributed to people they never ſaw; but " I experienced the good effects of the practice, for I ſoon felt my baſhful- " neſs ſubſide, being no longer under any dread of attracting attention; and " thus literally in a multitude I found ſafety.

" At

" At length the muſicians flouriſhed a prelude, and the gentlemen began " to take out partners for a dance.—By the way, Mr. Flapper, many of them " looked as if they had rather let it alone, foreſeeing, no doubt, the difficul- " ties they would have to encounter in clearing their way through the ſur- " rounding preſs—for my part I love a dance in my heart, but ſtranger as I " felt myſelf, I could not ſummon up aſſurance to aſk one of thoſe town-bred " ladies to join the ſet; particularly as Lady Quizz was not preſent to give " me a hint of the etiquette. It was fortunate I was thus cautious, for while " I was deliberating and trying to argue myſelf out of my fears, I overheard " the very young lady I wiſhed to ſelect decline dancing, alleging to an " officer who ſolicited her hand, that ſhe was fatigued to death driving her " reſtiff devils of poneys all that morning: and (would you think it, Sir) ſhe " ſwore a tremendous oath ſhe would diſcharge her groom as he was the " moſt drunken dog in the univerſe. Nor was this the only inſtance of new- " faſhioned good breeding that occurred in the courſe of the evening. The " very dances called for aſtounded me—*Drops of brandy—Moll in the wad* " *—Jenny bang'd the weaver*—and *Go to the devil and ſhake yourſelf.* Then, " Sir, there was more croſſing and joſtling in the movements than ever was " ſeen on the worſt regulated race-courſe. The *pas grave*, and the *pas de* " *rigadoon*, were equally diſcarded for ſomething that could neither be called " ſliding or jumping; and every couple that could make their way through " the ſet immediately ſallied out to another apartment, leaving all thoſe who " had not yet danced down in the lurch.

" But all this was nothing in compariſon to the doings that took place " when we were ſummoned to the ſupper rooms. Mrs. Mouldy ſeemed ſtre- " nuouſly deſirous of having ſome particular perſons move down ſtairs firſt, " in order, I ſuppoſe, to their being the better accommodated. But, alas! " the poor lady was no longer miſtreſs in her own houſe—her deſires ſigni- " fied nothing—in ſhort the natural principle of ſelf-love ſeemed to have " ſuperſeded the artificial one of politeneſs in toto—every body fought his " own way, and in the hurry of endeavouring to ſecure good ſeats, the forms " were overthrown—the diſhes deranged—the decanters broken, and the " ladies trampled upon. In this general wreck I had my particular ſhare " of ſuffering—my clothes were dirtied, my hands ſcratched, and one of my " ſhins broken—in fine, the uproar your correſpondent Mr. Thimble deſcribes " at his lady's ball was not greater than what I now beheld in a place that " to me was to be the ſchool of politeneſs. I muſt acknowledge, ſuch is my " invincible ruſticity, that I could not force my taſte into any ſort of accord- " ance with town cuſtoms or town manners, and that feeling myſelf greatly " annoyed, I contrived to make my eſcape by a viſto that I had the happineſs " to perceive opening through the crowd of ladies and gentlemen who were " waiting for entrance at the door of the apartment.

" The

" The next morning, or rather afternoon, I waited on lady Quizz; ſhe " expected to hear me ſay I was delighted; and upon my venturing to give " a hint of my real ſentiments was viſibly diſappointed.—I am concerned I " ſpoke ſo freely, particularly as I find by the morning papers that *the fete* " *at Mrs. Mouldy's went off with as great eclat as any given this ſeaſon, and* " *furniſhed a moſt brilliant aſſemblage of beauty and faſhion.*

" Since this unlucky blunder I have viſibly declined in her ladyſhip's eſti- " mation; ſo far from being preſented to her acquaintances, I am even left " out of her own parties, ſaving that ſhe once aſked me to dine on a Sunday " with two or three humble friends and the curate of the pariſh.—I plainly " ſee my ingenuouſneſs has *done me up*, as the faſhionable phraſe goes, and as " I have not aſſurance enough to riſk being black-beaned at Daly's, raſhneſs " to fight a duel without provocation, or extravagance to loſe more than I " can afford at caſino, I ſee no proſpect of getting reinſtated in her ladyſhip's " good opinion. I am, therefore, come to the reſolution of returning to my " native ſhades to-morrow, and in rural pleaſures and occupations will en- " deavour to forget my unſucceſsful attempt to acquire the *true ſçavoir vivre*, " or become a man of *ton*.

" I am, Sir,
" With great reliance on your indulgence,
" Your humble and obedient ſervant,
" LAUNCELOT IVY."

g.

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[A Letter Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER XXXIII.

TUESDAY, MAY 24, 1796.

" MR. FLAPPER,

" AS the public is greatly indebted to you for the trouble you have undertaken of inſtructing and amuſing them twice every week, it ſeems to me the bounden duty of each individual, as far as it is in his power, to aſſiſt you in this difficult and toilſome taſk, an aſſiſtance which my weak abilities never could have hoped to afford you had it not been for the following lucky accident. Yeſterday having ſent to the grocer's for ſome pounds of raiſins, they were ſent to me wrapped up in white paper, on which I preſently perceived a good deal of writing; and as I am naturally curious, and have little to do, I eagerly ſet about ſmoothing the paper and decyphering the characters, when at length, with no ſmall difficulty and ſome pleaſure I read and copied the following whimſical eſſay, which I now ſend you, in order that if at any time you ſhould find your genius oppreſſed by a temporary barenneſs, (a misfortune incident even to the moſt fluent writers,) you may, ſhould you think it worthy that honour, inſert it in ſome one of your papers.

" I am, reſpected Sir,
" Your moſt obedient ſervant,
" And conſtant reader,
" SIMON STOPGAP."

" A MEDITATION ON A ROTTEN CHEESE.

Mens agitat molem.

' What a mine of morality is a *mitey* cheeſe! what moraliſts muſt Welchmen be!—Let us conſider it as a world peopled with millions—an angel holds the magnifying glaſs, clears my organs of hearing, and enables me

'to underſtand their ſpeech—what a buſtle! what importance! what non-'ſenſe! Here I ſee without ſhifting the glaſs, two neighbouring courts—'councils are held—taxes raiſed—troops levied—war is declared for half an 'inch of cheeſe, perhaps the property of a third.—Hark,—the trumpet 'ſounds—Each hero's heart glows with ardour in his throbbing breaſt—the 'battles join—thouſands who lived this morning are now no more, and 'in both countries univerſal mourning prevails.

'Transferred to the ſenate I hear the orators diſputing—liberty in their 'mouths, but intereſt in their hearts—here are miniſters plotting more 'againſt their country than againſt the enemy—here, on the other hand, I 'behold with veneration worthy patriots—a Curtius, a Decius nobly devo-'ting himſelf for the commonweal—a Brutus, ſtill more nobly devoting his 'friend!—In this next dominion a tyrant rules and governs his people with 'a rod of iron—his pride, his avarice, his ambition, his cruelty, are almoſt 'the only diſeaſes of which his ſubjects die.—Lo, where he ſtands ſurrounded 'by his purpled guards, exulting in that power of doing ill, which is in 'effect his greateſt misfortune! elated with proſperity, he defies Heaven 'and wages againſt it perpetual war by deſtroying its creatures—impious, 'cruel wretch! forget not that the meaneſt of thy ſubjects is a *mite* as well 'as thou art, nor has nature made any difference between him and thee—'conſider that thou alſo art a *mite*—ſubject to the ſame wants and imperfec-'tions—tempered of the ſame cheeſe! and reflect, before it is too late, that 'thou alſo are equally liable to be ſwallowed up by the all-devouring maw 'of man.

'See here a mite, Columbus like, diſcovering new worlds.—He traverſes 'the globe, and terra-incognita is no more!—The diſcoverer comes from a 'region where ſcience prevails, and where the arts flouriſh.—Happy inva-'ſion!—Happy ſavages!—your teachers, your illuminators arrive! uſeful 'arts ſhall increaſe your conveniences; true philoſophy, by informing your 'minds, ſhall influence your manners, and pure religion ſhall ſanctify your 'ſouls! receive with open arms your beneficent brethren, who come to chaſe 'barbarity from your ſhores, and to eſtabliſh in its place the bliſs of civil 'concord!—But what do I ſee?—ſad reverſe!—the invaders land—the un-'offending, ill-armed multitude of natives are violently aſſaulted; one half 'of them are ſlaughtered, and the reſt are made ſlaves.

'But what are thoſe two diminutive animals buſtling about?—Let us look 'cloſer—Oh,—'tis a quarrel—this has taken the wall of the other—words 'ariſe—ſwords are drawn—the accident might be accommodated—the offence 'put up—But the *mite* is a *mite of honour*, and cannot brook an affront! 'feint quart—puſh tierce—the challenger falls,

Vitaque cum gemitu fugit indignata ſub umbras!

'But

'But about what is that circle of females goſſiping? they all talk together, 'and even my inſpired faculty ſcarcely enables me to comprehend their 'meaning—ſcandal is however the ſubject, and reputations are torn to 'pieces—a young and handſome *mite* has, it ſeems, lately been produced for 'the firſt time at an aſſembly—who or what is ſhe? whence comes ſhe? what 'is her name? her family?—The ſingular good-nature of one of the ſociety 'has declared her beautiful, ſenſible and virtuous;—an univerſal clamour 'ſucceeds—a dowdy, an idiot, a prude, one whom nobody knows, are vo-'ciferated from all quarters, and the excluſion of the poor young damſel 'from all company of genteel *mites* is almoſt unanimouſly voted.

'Behold next a ſet of philoſophers perplexing their own heads and thoſe 'of their neighbours, about the formation of their *globe*.—Oh! what conten-'tion! what preſumption! what vanity!—How the little reptiles chatter, 'as if, like Echo, they were all voice!—Cauſes—effects—atoms—chance.— 'Some will have it that their cheeſe, ſelf-exiſtent, was from all eternity, 'but the wiſer allow that there was a time when it did not exiſt, and that 'a time will come when, *ripe* for deſtruction, it ſhall be no more. Who 'would not laugh, when he conſiders the ſelf-importance of theſe contemp-'tible little animals? Who would not weep when he reflects that we are all '*mites?*

TO THE FLAPPER.

"DEAR SIR,

"I feel a very ſtrong intereſt in every thing which tends to the advantage "of my countrymen and the credit of our country. I accordingly read your "paper conſtantly at a friend's houſe where it is taken in; and accepting "an invitation from the Directors of the Grand Canal, I eat a very hearty "breakfaſt with them on the day their docks were opened. Yeſterday I "went with a medical friend to look at the new botanic garden at Glaſſnevin, "and was highly gratified with the promiſing appearances of its ſucceſs; but "one circumſtance, not in the printed proſpectus, gave me peculiar pleaſure, 'as a valuable and hitherto unheard-of addition to the ſyſtem, which ſome "perſon in the neighbourhood has juſt deviſed—I mean the eſtabliſhment of "a Botanic Chop houſe for the entertainment of the amateurs of the ſcience "and the public in general.

"The Botanic Chop-houſe! What an inviting title, Mr. Flapper! What "a charming accommodation of learning to taſte! Surely the proprietor "means no ſarcaſtic inſinuation that eating and drinking are our *ſubſtantial* "objects in Ireland and ſcience only *nominal*.—No, Mr. Flapper, I give him "credit for the admirable and highly poetical idea of transferring the pro-

"perties

" perties of the food to that which feeds on it. And if a beef-ſteak be, as " old Iſaac Sparks of facetious memory uſed to call it ' the beſt of all vege- " tables,' the ſtudents who reſort to the Botanic Chop-houſe muſt be good " botaniſts. The valuable effects of gingerbread alphabets for children have " been long known, but are quite outdone by this plan, which adapts the " nutriment we take in to the knowledge we would digeſt, and makes the " food of the body become in the very ſame ſort the food of the mind.

" The Chop-houſe ſeemed to me every way calculated and fitted up to " prove the utility of the tutelary ſcience. The rooms, inſtead of being de- " nominated *the Sun*, *the George*, &c. are claſſed *monandria*, *diandria*, &c. " according to the numbers in the company to which they are accommodated " —the drinking veſſels exhibit different ſpecies of *calices*—the proviſions are " claſſed in the larder by a botanic arrangement, and thoſe who frequent " the houſe, I'll anſwer for it, will have their *ſtamina* tried. Do, Mr. Flapper, " recommend to the public this moſt uſeful diſcovery, which removes all ob- " jections againſt the botanic art; for no one will talk of its *flimſineſs* when " the Chop-houſe can always ſupply ſomething *ſolid*, or complain of the " *dryneſs* of its ſtudy when the *tavern* is juſt at hand.

" I am, Sir,
" With much reſpect,
" Your humble ſervant,

N. S. " THOMAS APPLETREE."

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The Flapper.

NUMBER XXXIV.

SATURDAY, MAY 28, 1796.

—Aux regions a lui même inconnues,
Ou voleront ſes gracieux ecrits,
A ce tableau de ſes mœurs ingenues
Tous ſes lecteurs deviennent ſes amis.

GRESSET.

His the high honour that, in climes unknown,
Where'er his wand'ring volume may extend,
Where'er that picture of his mind is ſhewn,
In every reader he ſhall find a friend.

Altered from *Hayley.*

IN the remarks which I gave lately on the poetry of *Cowper* I obſerved that in his deſcriptions he avoids all unneceſſary minuteneſs of detail, and confines himſelf to thoſe ſtriking features which are moſt likely to make a forcible impreſſion on the mind. Though in this particular he ſeems merely to have followed the inſtinctive bent of his genius, he has perhaps attained one of the moſt deſirable ends of poetic ſkill and labour. A poet who deſcribes juſtly and beautifully will neceſſarily give pleaſure, even though he ſhould ſay all that can be ſaid, and anticipate every conceivable idea. But he will afford a much more exalted delight when he impregnates the mind with the ſeeds of new conceptions, and inſtead of thinking excluſively for his reader, inſpires him with a power of thinking for himſelf—It is in this inſtance, amongſt others, that the father of Grecian poetry has outdone all the world—and may I be permitted to add, that it is in this particular too that his moſt celebrated tranſlator ſeems chiefly to have failed. The ancient bard, in the energy of his ſoul, darts forth the pregnant thought, and leaves it to fructify where it falls. *Pope* on the contrary, foreſtals the proceſs of nature—expands the precious germ with an elegant but officious care, and reduces his reader to the ſterile pleaſure of inactive contemplation.

Having mentioned this ſubject, it may not be amiſs to give an inſtance. Homer in deſcribing the eloquence of Ulyſſes, ſays ſimply that it was like the falling flakes of the winter ſnows—leaving it to his reader to diſcover for himſelf that it muſt of courſe be *ſoft*, *copious*, *pure* and *penetrating*. *Pope*, artful rather than ardent, and perhaps judging it more prudent to give an inferior pleaſure to the many, than a more refined gratification to the intelligent few, diſplays at once and in open view, the rich contents of his maſter's teeming idea.

But when he ſpeaks what elocution flows!
Soft as the fleeces of deſcending ſnows,
His copious accents fall with eaſy art,
Melting they fall, and ſink into the heart.

That this is uncommonly beautiful I readily acknowledge, but it is a beauty as unlike that of the original as can poſſibly be conceived.

But it is *Cowper* with whom I am concerned—I ſhall therefore exemplify my obſervations reſpecting him by adducing what the paſſage I have juſt quoted naturally ſuggeſts, his deſcription of a ſhower of ſnow.

> Firſt falls a fleecy ſhower; the downy flakes
> Deſcending, and with never ceaſing lapſe
> Softly alighting upon all below
> Aſſimilate all objects. Earth receives
> Gladly the thick'ning mantle.—

The copious brevity of this paſſage, as well as its exquiſite juſtneſs and ſimplicity, muſt be evident to every reader. I cannot however omit the opportunity of comparing it with a beautiful, but much more laboured picture of the ſame object given by the amiable poet already mentioned, in his charming poem on *Winter*.

> Thro' the huſhed air the whitening ſhower deſcends,
> At firſt thin wavering; 'till at laſt the flakes
> Fall broad, and wide, and thin; dimming the day
> With a continual flow. The cheriſhed fields
> Put on their winter robe of pureſt white—
> 'Tis brightneſs all—
> Earth's univerſal face, deep hid and chill,
> Is one wide dazzling waſte that buries deep
> The works of man.—

But although *Cowper* ſhuns minuteneſs of deſcription, he very frequently, as has been already obſerved, deſcribes minute or trivial matters—and it is certain that on theſe, a maſter of the imitative arts can diſplay his excellence no leſs than on the moſt dignified ſubjects. For example, there is nothing very remarkable or ſtriking in a lighted candle—we ſee it without a thought: but a lighted candle may be ſo painted as to excite both pleaſure and ſurprize, and perhaps to arreſt the attention of a common obſerver more powerfully than the beſt executed landſcape or hiſtory piece. In like manner it would hardly be imagined that there could be any thing very intereſting in the appearance of a boor going from his cottage at peep of day to hew timber in a neighbouring wood. And yet from this familiar circumſtance *Cowper* has formed a poetic ſketch which it is ſcarcely poſſible to read without being delighted—and which has furniſhed an eminent artiſt with a ſubject for a very beautiful print that I dare ſay few of my readers are unacquainted with. I am ſure I ſhall be excuſed for tranſcribing the paſſage to which I refer.—

> Forth goes the woodman, leaving unconcern'd
> The chearful haunts of man, to wield the axe
> And drive the wedge in yonder foreſt drear,
> From morn to eve his ſolitary taſk.
> Shaggy, and lean, and ſhrew'd, with pointed ears
> And tail cropp'd ſhort, half lurcher and half cur
> His dog attends him. Cloſe behind his heel
> Now creeps he ſlow; and now with many a friſk
> Wide ſcamp'ring ſnatches up the drifted ſnow
> With ivory teeth, or ploughs it with his ſnout;
> Then ſhakes his powder'd coat and barks for joy.
> Heedleſs of all his pranks the ſturdy churl
> Moves right toward the mark; nor ſtops for aught,
> But, now and then, with preſſure of his thumb
> T' adjuſt the fragrant charge of a ſhort tube
> That fumes beneath his noſe: the trailing cloud
> Streams far behind him, ſcenting all the air.

Deſcriptions

Deſcriptions of this kind, in which nature and ſimplicity are the prevailing characters, have a kind of myſterious power of captivating the human mind. The degree of the pleaſure they afford is greater than can be rationally accounted for. It muſt be ultimately reſolved into the wiſe and gracious appointment of our Creator, who by the original laws of our nature has fitted us for deriving the pureſt, and moſt perfect gratification from thoſe ſcenes and objects, of which we are leaſt liable to be deprived by caſualty, and which, inſtead of expoſing us (like the far greater number of thoſe enjoyments which we have formed for ourſelves) to guilt and turbulence, are the means, as well as the preſervatives of innocence and tranquillity. I cannot therefore help conſidering it as one of the happieſt exerciſes of genius, thus to reſtore the mind to its ſafe and natural habits, and to awaken by the ſweet ſtrains of the poetic lyre, thoſe capacities of guiltleſs delight which, though ſtill exiſting in the ſoul, are too frequently benumbed by the opiates of luxury.

It is thus that the poet becomes a benefactor of human kind and a miniſter of Heaven—and it is in this point of view that the deſcriptive powers of *Cowper* appear to me to be invaluable. By the happieſt choice of ſubjects and the moſt lively repreſentation of them, he perpetually allures the wandering fancy to the ſources of harmleſs ſatisfaction, and even his moſt trifling pictures are ſo many new proofs that to a well-formed and uncorrupted mind the means of innocent amuſement are inexhauſtible. Inſtances of this kind occur ſo frequently, particularly in the TASK, that it would be impoſſible to enumerate them. He who has read this poem, need not, I am ſure, be reminded of the progreſs of ſeats, from the joint-ſtool to the ſofa—the Threſher—the Waggoner—or even the ſtill lighter ſubjects of cutting fodder for cattle from a ſtack—or the lengthened ſhadows of a bright winter morning. The laſt, in particular, is ſo ſtriking an inſtance of that very talent of which I am ſpeaking, that I cannot deny myſelf the pleaſure of inſerting the paſſage.

'Tis morning, and the ſun with ruddy orb
Aſcending fires th' horizon; while the clouds
That crowd away before the driving wind,
More ardent as the duſk emerges more,
Reſemble moſt ſome city in a blaze
Seen through the leafleſs wood. His ſlanting ray
Slides ineffectual down the ſnowy vale,
And tinging all with his own roſy hue,
From ev'ry herb and ev'ry ſpiry blade
Stretches a length of ſhadow o'er the field.
Mine ſpindling into longitude immenſe,
In ſpite of gravity, and ſage remark
That I myſelf am but a fleeting ſhade,
Provokes me to a ſmile. With eye aſkance
I view the muſcular, proportioned limb,
Transform'd to a lean ſhank. The ſhapeleſs pair
As they deſign'd to mock me, at my ſide
Take ſtep for ſtep; and as I near approach
The cottage, walk along the plaiſter'd wall—
Prepoſt'rous ſight! the legs without the man.

There is ſcarcely any thing which more contributes to make *Cowper*'s poetry popular than the power which he poſſeſſes of enlivening his deſcriptions with ſtrokes of the moſt genuine humour—and it frequently heightens the effect that we find this where we leaſt expect it. In this particular *Cowper* ſeems to bear a near reſemblance to the celebrated *Hogarth*—and though the pen of the

the poet may be thought to poſſeſs leſs poignancy than the pencil of the painter, the difference appears to have ariſen rather from want of inclination than of power. What *Cowper* could have done in this way, had he choſen to indulge in it, he has ſhewn in an inſtance which alſo furniſhes the moſt ſtriking proof of that very congeniality with *Hogarth* which I have mentioned—I mean his admirable repreſentation of the well known female figure in that painter's *Winter Morning*. If *Hogarth* had wiſhed to ſee a poetic expanſion of his own idea, *Cowper* would doubtleſs have been the man of his choice. There is not a thought intimated in the original, which *Cowper* does not appear to have imbibed in all its native warmth. By the aid of his muſe he places the full figure before us, and enables us to view it in all directions, while the more limited powers of the ſiſter art could only preſent to us a ſingle ſurface. It is neceſſary to keep this in mind, and to recollect that *Hogarth*'s is the original work, leſt he ſhould ſink on a compariſon. When *Fielding* wiſhed to convey a complete idea of his Mrs. *Bridget Alworthy* he refers to *Hogarth*'s figure, but without attempting a tranſcript. What *Fielding* ſeems to have ſhrunk from, *Cowper*, with *Fielding*'s caution in his view, undertakes and executes. The reader will find this entertaining paſſage (which my limits will not permit me to tranſcribe) in a poem, entitled TRUTH in *Cowper*'s firſt volume.

At preſent I ſhall add but one remark more. It is obſerved by *Horace* in his *Art of Poetry*, that apt words ſpontaneouſly follow juſt conceptions :—

Verbaque proviſam rem non invita ſequuntur.

Perhaps never was this more perfectly exemplified than in *Cowper*. His verſe might no doubt frequently admit of improvement—his expreſſions ſcarcely ever. His fancy ſoftly ductile and ſtrongly tenacious, receives and keeps the vivid impreſs of each object, and the caſt from ſo fair a mould muſt of courſe preſent every feature and lineament with the eaſe of nature and the accuracy of truth. I would beg leave to recommend this obſervation in particular to the examination of my critical readers, and I dare to believe many of them will join me in the opinion, that in choice of expreſſion (if choice it can be called where there is no mark of fore-thought) *Cowper* yields to no poet in the Engliſh language.

L.

D U B L I N:

Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.

[Price, Two Pence.]

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[A Letter Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER XXXV.

TUESDAY, MAY 31, 1796.

Quod quæris eſt intus.

Why ſhould excurſive fancy roam,
When what we look for is at home?
A man by abſence thus miſled,
Seeks for the hat that's on his head.

TO THE FLAPPER.

"FLAPPER you're a famous fellow—you are right, decidedly—de-
" cidedly you're right: it is vanity that makes men ridiculous. I met *Bob*
" *Tacit* the other day at an exhibition of pictures. He is a monſtrous harm-
" leſs, good kind of man, only rather a *raff*. I went in with *Lord Curricle*,
" *Jack Neckſwell*, and *Colonel Pantaloon*. I ſaw *Bob* decidedly; but I got
" my back to him, and never once took up my glaſs; ſo that he could not
" expect I ſhould ſalute him. He ought to have gone away, you know—
" decidedly he ſhould have gone away—he made himſelf quite ridiculous
" by ſtaying. It is certainly vanity that makes men ſo abſurd: becauſe I
" had come up and ſhaken him familiarly by the hand the day before,
" when there was no genteeler man in company, he was determined that I
" ſhould take notice of him then; and I will tell you how he contrived it.
" I happened to ſay 'there's *Sir George Crop*, an amazing picture! de-
' cidedly the beſt portrait I ever ſaw, a famous likeneſs, never ſaw ſo ſtriking
' a thing in my life.' As I turned to ſay this,—Bob chanced to be looking
" me full in the face.—*How can you judge of the likeneſs*, ſaid he, *at ſuch a*
" *diſtance without your glaſs?*—Ha! *Robert* my good fellow—how are you?
" is that you? How long are you in town my hearty? I'm amazing glad to

" ſee you: have you been long here? *No: I had but juſt come in when you* " *ſaw me firſt.* What! you were looking at theſe pictures?—famous pic- " tures!—*No*: *I have been examining an original.* Having ſaid this, he turned " on his heel; and a friend of his coming in juſt then, apologized for " having made him wait, and they went out together. It was the vanity of " wiſhing me to ſalute him that made ſuch a ridiculous figure of poor Bob. " —Yes, you're clearly right: decidedly you're right. I made a famous " pun after he went away—Bob (ſaid I) was canvaſſing for a ſalute.

" The ſame day I ſaw another inſtance of the truth of your remark. I hap- " pened to meet *Lord Lounger* in College-green; I ſaw him from the other " ſide, and ran over. ' How are you *Lounger?* were you in the *row* at the ' private theatre? it was a famous lounge; we were all curſed drunk.'— " Do you know, Flapper, that he ſcarce returned my ſalute—and having " replied to the three branches of my addreſs, with ' *very well;*' ' *no;*' " and ' *were you?* walked away! I am certain I muſt have paſſed him by " at ſome time without ſaluting him, and he is monſtrous proud: it is very " ridiculous—but this muſt have offended him, otherwiſe he never would " have cut me, for we were quite intimate. I had been an entire evening " in the ſame room with him at *Lady Finale*'s concert about a month " before.

" Oh! by the by—are you fond of muſick? do you play?—you may have " a practice at my rooms whenever you think fit. I am never at a loſs for " a quartetto, as it is quite indifferent to me which I take the baſs, tenor, " or one of the violin parts. I ſung ſecond fiddle the other night, there " being but one violin in the room, which I inſiſted *Bianchi* ſhould take, " and lead—for I do not think it fair to enter into competition with a pro- " feſſor; or out-do a man who confines his pretenſions to one line of emi- " nence. In fact the endeavour at univerſal excellence is nine times out of " ten a vain attempt; and betrays men into endleſs abſurdities.

" I aſſure you, my good Flapper, I like you extremely; and ſhall be happy " to ſhew you any attention that lays in my power. I am certain it was " you that laid your cane on my ſhoulder the other evening, when I got " up and ſtood before you at *Miſs Poole*'s benefit—but never mind! I like " to do theſe cool things—and beſides every genteel man juſtles and is rude. " It is true you touched me ſomewhat roughly, and looked a little ſavage

" when

" when I turned round—but I knew from your face you muſt be the Flapper;
" (and ſo I mentioned to *Jack Neckſwell)* and had only given me an official
" tap.

" She did not ſing ' *Hope told a flattering tale*' well, (though I ſaid *brava.*)
" I will try it for you any morning you call in, though I have not touched
" the harp lately. I got out of practice in conſequence of a hurt in my
" wriſt, which I received fencing—(have you ever ſeen me fence?) and about
" the ſame time ſprained my ankle in leaping, as *Harlequin* at a maſquerade;
" ſo that I could not manage the pedals.—I have ſcarce danced any ſince.
" Poor *Veſtris!* how fond he was of ſeeing me dance!—the laſt time we
" were together was in Paris, at *Caſtor* et *Pollox;* where I boxed in the
" funeral games—I will ſhew you the fleſh-coloured *undreſs* and girdle which
" I wore. Do not call on me for ſome days however, as I am at preſent
" a good deal occupied compoſing a ſermon, which I intend preſenting to
" *Kirwan*, and which, (if he makes uſe of it, as no doubt he will) muſt
" force two thouſand pounds at leaſt from the wrung feelings of his audi-
" ence. I heard him the laſt time he preached—all about me were admiring
" him—I believe he is an eloquent man.—But why ſhould not laymen preach?
" Might one act a ſermon at the private theatre?—As ſoon as I ſhall have
" finiſhed this work, and completed a law argument for *Counſellor Deference*,
" and a ſeries of queſtions in trigonometry for *Doctor Tangent*, againſt he
" examines at the next fellowſhip courſe, (for I know they both wiſh for my
" aſſiſtance, though they have not expreſsly aſked it), as ſoon this is over
" we ſhall have our practice when you pleaſe—for as to the anſwers which
" I am writing to *Paine's Age of Reaſon*, and *Watſon's Agology for the Bible*,
" theſe are a mere lounge—I ſhall do them εκπαρεργε, and be nothing
" the leſs at your ſervice.

" I was once very muſical indeed; and happened at Venice to lead the
" band at the opera, on *Collarco's* being ſuddenly taken ill. I am particu-
" larly fond of the compoſitions of *Lungarco*, *Bugia* and *Menzognero.*—
" You would be ſurprized, in an overture of this latter compoſer, to hear
" me execute the firſt violin part on the violoncello—I can't go through the
" whole on a double baſs, though I wear a flat ſtick for the purpoſe, ſtrapped
" and buckled along the thumb of my left hand. But what I like beſt in

" the

" the muſical way is my violin concerto; the whole of which I have com-
" poſed myſelf, and introduced a *pizzicato* variation to *Lullaby*, with a ſhort
" *ſtaccato* accompanyment for the baſs, which is decidedly preferable to the
" drowſy diſguſting drawl in which that air is commonly performed—in my
" concerto it is all as ſhort as toaſted cheeſe.

" Farewell, my dear Flapper, I am grown quite melancholy ſince poor
" *Tom Cutever*'s death—No, ſeriouſly I am—decidedly the ſhockingeſt thing
" I ever heard. Are you a ſubſcriber to the private theatre?—If you come
" to me at one o'clock I will drive you in my gig; if I ſhould not be at
" home when you call, the ſketch you will ſee over the chimney is by me.
" I like the ſubject; myſelf looking in a glaſs, and painting my own picture.
" Farewell, I am juſt going out with my piſtols to hit the ace of diamonds
" for a wager.

" Yours moſt truly,
" JOHN TRADESALL."

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The Flapper.

NUMBER XXXVI.

SATURDAY, JUNE 4, 1796.

Metam properamus ad unam.

OVID.

Why ſpur the ſpeedy? why with levities
New wing thy ſhort, ſhort days to rapid flight?

YOUNG.

A FEW evenings ſince I happened to hear a converſation of ſome young men of faſhion on the choice of a *lounge* for the ſummer. All ſeemed to agree in deteſting the dulneſs of a country life and a family ſociety, but what could beſt be ſubſtituted for the town amuſements of the winter it was not eaſy to determine. Sea-bathing—races—journeys—camps—watering-places—were by their ſeveral admirers recommended with much loudneſs and little argument. One at laſt by a hit of the moſt happy invention reconciled all the rival ſyſtems by propoſing to take them all in ſucceſſion. The tireſome length of ſummer, he ſaid, would make any one amuſement drudgery, while the *bourgeois* would be effectually thown out by changing the faſhion as ſoon as they ſhould get into it. Theſe reaſons were pronounced invincible by a horſe-laugh and a volley of oaths from the whole company, and it was *una voce* reſolved that in the enſuing ſummer campaign the *Enemy Time* (as he is ſtiled in one of our modern comedies) is to be attacked by every ſpecies of hoſtile preparation.

On my return home I could not eaſily get the noiſe of their clamour out of my ears, or the folly of their purſuits out of my mind. "How wicked," ſaid I, "is this ungrateful inſenſibility of the Creator's goodneſs! How "fooliſh this miſapplication of one of the beſt of his gifts!" Muſing on this ſubject I ſat up in my elbow-chair conſiderably beyond my uſual hour, when at laſt my corporeal ſenſes fell away in ſleep, while my fancy continued her train of thought in the following VISION:

Under the peculiar influence of an attendant ſpirit I imagined myſelf raiſed to an aerial eminence, which afforded me a commanding view of a ſpacious plain. On this the whole human race diſtinctly appeared to me in a perfectly natural ſtate engaged in purſuits adapted to their reſpective ages, and following their individual occupations. One thing alone at firſt preſented itſelf to my obſervation differing from what I had ever ſeen before. The atmoſphere in which they moved was made ſenſible to my eyes, and appeared

to conſiſt of ſeveral threads or ſlender filaments, all of which ſeemed to run in an horizontal direction parallel to each other, and to be loſt ultimately in a dark miſt which covered a prodigious gulph at the extremity of the view. One of theſe threads I perceived to appertain to each perſon, by which he was drawn forwards in an involuntary progreſs towards the gulph. "You "ſee," ſaid my conductor, "the human race on the *journey of life*, pro- "ceeding towards the *Gulph of Eternity*. The atmoſphere in which they "move is *Time*, and the filaments are the *Threads of Life*. That which "belongs to each perſon is coiled about him as he advances, and thoſe who "have advanced far on their journey are accordingly oppreſſed with their "weight. From a diverſity of texture and ſtrength, ſome of the threads "ſnap ſhort ſuddenly, while others becoming gradually too weak for their "purpoſes give way almoſt imperceptibly. What ſeems to you a plain is "in reality a declivity, and on the breaking of the thread belonging to any "perſon, he becomes incapable any longer of efforts of reſiſtance, and is "rapidly carried down to the gulph."

I was on a ſecond ſurvey ſatisfied of the truth of this, and looking with more minuteneſs I perceived other circumſtances which had hitherto eſcaped me. I now ſaw ſeveral lines drawn quite acroſs the plain dividing it at equal diſtances, which were croſſed again at right angles by others at diſtances which were irregular. The former I was informed marked out the diviſions of *years*, *months*, &c. the latter were the boundaries of *ſpace*, marking out the ſeveral *regions and provinces* of the earth. There was often a perceivable difference in the texture of the threads, and the velocity of progreſs, according to the different diviſions of *ſpace*, but the diverſities according to the diviſions of *time*, thoſe which were made acroſs the threads were much more apparent. Each filament at its beginning was extremely ſlight, inſomuch that many of them broke at the very firſt inſtant; in the reſt there appeared a gradual but ſlow increaſe of ſtrength and firmneſs to a certain point, where a gradual but more rapid decay began to take place. Theſe were the general laws affecting the filaments, but on cloſe examination, even in the very ſame diviſions, there ſeemed but little correſpondence in the degree of their durability. An attentive inſpection exhibited to me each individual thread in a ſtate of almoſt perpetual change. Sometimes one which appeared remarkably ſtrong grew ſenſibly weaker, and ſometimes, though I thought not ſo frequently, the contrary ſeemed to take place. Sometimes a perſon who ſeemed ſcarcely to have been drawn on at all was ſuddenly hurried forward by a rapid motion, and, after my eyes had been but a moment turned from him, I found him advanced much nearer the gulph, with almoſt the whole of his filament coiled about him.

I applied to my conductor for an explanation of the cauſe of theſe changes. "The regular variations," ſaid he, "according to the diviſions of *time* and "*place* are effects of the eſtabliſhed laws of nature reſpecting *age* and *climate*: "the deviations from theſe, the ſudden and irregular changes of individual "filaments, depend altogether on the perſons to whom they belong—on their

"tempers

" tempers, their vices, their employments and their caprice. There is ſcarcely " any thing whatever done by any perſon which does not more or leſs affect " the ſtate of his thread, though often without his adverting to it. Thoſe " groupes which you ſee here and there at ſedentary occupations, as at cards " for inſtance, imagine themſelves ſtationary, though you can perceive that " they are drawn forwards with very conſiderable rapidity; and thoſe whom " you ſee by vigorous and athletic exertion making diſplay of the ſtrength " of their filaments you will find by thoſe very exertions weaken them con- " ſiderably, and often break them altogether."

This view of human actions and incidents by their effects upon the threads of life preſented to my obſervation ſome extraordinary appearances which eſcaped the notice of the actors themſelves. Thus a brilliant aſſembly of perſons of faſhion at a *ball* ſeemed to me only a laborious effort to coil up around themſelves with much velocity a large portion of their reſpective filaments: a *battle*, while it appeared to thoſe concerned in it a zealous effort for national glory, and an honourable diſplay of perſonal valour, exhibited to me nothing more than a number of men employed in cutting at certain threads connected with each other: and many whom I perceived travelling about from place to place, country ſquires engaged warmly in what are termed the ſports of the field, muſical compoſers, inventors of faſhions, collectors of rarities, politicians who thought they were deciding the fates of empires, and authors who imagined they were penetrating the depths of ſcience, theſe and many other of the moſt buſy claſſes in ſociety really did nothing more with all their energy than waſte away much of their own threads and a little of their neighbours.

And yet I thought I obſerved that more attention than I had expected was given to calculating the velocity at which men were carried forward, for conſiderable ingenuity was diſplayed in the conſtruction of various *machines* to aſcertain it with minute accuracy. But my conductor immediately pointed out one common error under which all thoſe machines laboured. " They calculate," ſaid he, " the velocity of the movement on a ſuppoſition of its uniformity, whereas, " from what has been pointed out to you before, it is diverſified exceedingly " by particular circumſtances of each individual. The *true meaſure of time*," ſaid he, " for practical purpoſes is in the *mind*—theſe artificial ones have " long ſince been found of little uſe, and now ſerve only for ornament."

I took particular notice of certain perſons employed ſeemingly as rope-makers in the repair of ſuch filaments as were decaying, but whom by their dreſs and manner I recognized as the regulars and irregulars of the hoſt of *Galen*. They were called upon by all, though I could not but obſerve that thoſe who called on them moſt rarely went on moſt comfortably in their journey. I was much entertained with their mode of treating thoſe who with over-anxious ſolicitude beſought them to repair threads which had ſuſtained no injury. Theſe they ſent after ſome time to particular ſpots on the plain, where they joined a crowd collected from all quarters, drank of a particular ſpring, and danced 'till their threads were broken.

" You

" You ſee," ſaid my conductor, " the great attention which is paid to " that part of the filament which at the inſtant is rolling off, while the great " portion which is beyond it, and the important changes which you may in " many caſes perceive juſt coming on are not at all adverted to. Believe me," ſaid he, " the cauſe of this prepoſterous abſurdity is not natural ſhort-ſighted- " neſs in man, or obſcurity in what is before him. Nothing is ſo certain " by univerſal experience as that the *Gulph of Eternity* is the final deſtination " of all; thoſe perſons habited in fable, whom you ſee inceſſantly endeavour- " ing to ſolicit attention to this, labour without effect. It is not that men " cannot ſee, but that they will not look—it is their ſtudy to avoid even a " caſual glance towards it—it is the buſineſs of their lives to be turned from " it—they get into crowds to have their view of it obſtructed—they gather " about them ſplendid and glittering ſubſtances to attract their gaze—they " call in noiſe and clamour to divert their attention—they liſten with eager- " neſs to thoſe whom they have bribed to deny its exiſtence. It is the folly " of man," ſaid my conductor, " to ſhut his eyes becauſe his ſituation is " critical, it is his madneſs to think of bowing down dictates of univerſal nature " to the caprice of human vanity, and the degradation of its corrupt affec- " tions." I acknowledged the juſtice of theſe animadverſions—I was aſhamed that I was a man.

My conductor perceived my dejection, and aſked me would I wiſh to inſpect the filaments of perſons with whom I was acquainted. I haſtily ſnatched at the opportunity of learning what would be the iſſue of a violent fever under which the uſeful life of the much-valued *Æmilius* lay at hazard. In an inſtant I ſaw the thread ſnap ſhort—" and is it true," ſaid I! " *Æmilius* " gone!—*Æmilius* the brave, the humane, the ſincere, the generous, the dig- " nified, the accompliſhed! I knew him well—I reſpected his attainments— " I loved his worth. His underſtanding was employed to know what might " be uſeful: his heart had no wiſh but to promote its practice. His private " liberality was unbounded, and, with a ſplendid conſiſtency, his public plans " were magnificent. He encouraged the genius, he ſtimulated the exertions, " he loved the character of his countrymen: he promoted the manufactures, " he advanced the agriculture, he explored the antiquities of his country. " He was the active friend of every man who would ſerve it; he was the " munificent patron of every art that could embelliſh it. And is he gone " for ever," ſaid I! " to the *Gulph of Eternity!*"—My eyes were filled with tears—I could ſee no more—I awoke diſturbed from my viſion, and of all its baſeleſs fabric the ſingle ſad reality which remained was the death of my friend.

f.

D U B L I N:
Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.
[Price, Two Pence.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER XXXVII.

TUESDAY, JUNE 7, 1796.

Oh! if to dance all night, and dreſs all day,
Charm'd the ſmall-pox or chas'd old age away;
Who would not ſcorn what houſewifes cares produce,
Or who would learn one earthly thing of uſe?
But ſince, alas! frail beauty muſt decay,
Curl'd or uncurl'd ſince locks will turn to grey;
What then remains but well your pow'r to uſe,
And keep good humour ſtill whate'er you loſe?

POPE.

TO THE FLAPPER.

SIR,

"AMONG the various caſes that call for a continual exerciſe of equanimity, there is one which ſeems never to have been properly conſidered; I mean the caſe of thoſe ladies who, having fluttered like butterflies through the ſummer ſeaſon of life, relapſe in its dreary winter into ſomewhat worſe than the caterpillar ſtate. Indeed I cannot well imagine a ſituation more diſagreeable than that of an antiquated toaſt, who, by the nonſenſical adulation of fops and fools, had been perſuaded to a belief of her being poſſeſſed of deſpotic power over the hearts of gazing multitudes, when ſhe beholds a new idol ſet up in her place, and receiving the incenſe of her quondam adorers, while her ſhrine is deſerted, and her ſmiles of allurement and frowns of diſapprobation equally diſregarded. The monarch dethroned may look forward to a hope of being reinſtated in empire—the vanquiſhed warrior can conſole himſelf with thinking he 'may live to fight another day,'—but the decaying beauty ſees the inexorable ſpectre, old age, with ſtill growing envy purſuing her ſteps, and every day mercileſsly robbing her of a grace, or defacing a charm, without a chance of its ravages being checked, or its waſte ſupplied.

"To repair a devaſtation ſo dreadful in its nature, the ancients tell us of an extraordinary expedient deviſed by *Medea*, who was at once a princeſs and a ſorcereſs. This lady, Sir, was poſſeſſed of a kettle, a boil in which had the wonderful effect of reſtoring youth, effacing the marks impreſſed by the cruel fangs of time, rekindling brilliancy in lack-luſtre eyes, and calling forth bloom on faded cheeks, inſomuch that a patient who hobbled into the kettle decrepid and wrinkled as *Otway*'s witch, tripped out of it alert and dimpled as a milk-maid on the lawn. What a valuable invention was this!—what a pity it is loſt!—yes, irretrievably loſt!—very likely *Medea* broke the kettle and burned the receipt of her enviable lotion in a fit of rage, when forſaken by that faithleſs rover *Jaſon*, as ſhe then became convinced by ſad experience of the inefficacy of uſing coſmetics.

" Since the loſs of this wonderful machine, many efforts have been made " to find ſome ſubſtitute for it. I remember ſeeing a print of a mill for " grinding old women young, which was, I ſuppoſe, intended as a model " of ſome public-ſpirited adventurer's plan: but the project ended (as many " a ſpecious project does) in vapour; nor has any thing of a ſimilar nature " been ſtruck out ſince—probably becauſe an ample reward has not been " offered for its diſcovery, as there is for that of the longitude, a diſcovery " which many of your readers, Mr. Flapper, muſt think of much leſs con- " ſequence.

" In ſpight, however, of loſſes and diſappointments, many women of ſpirit " and perſeverance perſiſted, and *ſet a good face on the matter*, by endea- " vouring to conceal the depredations of a foe whom it was impoſſible to " conquer or keep at bay. Theſe had recourſe to artificial beauties; falſe " teeth—falſe complexions—and falſe treſſes, replaced thoſe of which ty- " rannic age had bereft them: and truly, conſidering that all things human " are ſubject to decay, the inventors and venders of thoſe admirable ſubſti- " tutes merit great applauſe and encouragement. We have only to lament " that the arts they profeſs are yet but in a progreſſive ſtate, and have not " quite attained that conſummate degree of perfection which ſets detection " at defiance. Some time ſince they fell into much diſrepute on account of " the unlucky accident which happened to *Miſs Froſty* at a grand gala ſupper. " The poor lady, ſtooping raſhly for one of her fore-teeth which had dropt " into the plate of fricaſee ſhe was affecting to eat, ſet fire to the long feathers " in her head-dreſs, and in the aukward efforts of ſome meddling folks to " ſtifle the conflagration, her complexion was entirely rubbed off, and her " fine hair (that day purchaſed) torn from her head. There, Sir, was a train of " miſhaps, worth the weeping over!—and indeed *Miſs Froſty* appeared to " feel them in their full force, while, like a fine ruin, ſhe ſtood drooping " under the obſervation of the company.

" Alarmed at this vexatious incident, ſeveral of the candidates for perpe- " tual beauty forſook all dependence on their advertiſing friends, and fell " upon a new method of ſecuring their aim: this was, to retain the manners " of extreme youth, though compelled to relinquiſh its bloom. They ac- " cordingly 'liſped and ambled and nicknamed God's creatures';—nay, ſome " carried the jeſt ſo far, as to giggle in deſpight of black teeth, and dance " though crippled with rheumatiſm. But all would not do;—forced civility, " or apparent diſguſt mortified them into a juſt ſenſe of their error in ima- " gining that men were ſo ſhort-ſighted as to be thus impoſed upon—to miſtake " affectation for high ſpirits, and folly for youth.

" Thus foiled and diſcomfited, the council of female notables came to a " reſolution of deſiſting from all efforts in the firſt perſon, and of transferring " the arduous taſk of diſguiſing the unmannerly incurſions of old age to " their mantua-makers and milliners. They, poor creatures! have enough " to do in fulfilling the expectations formed from their abilities; for let the " ladies think what they will, Mr. Flapper, it is not an eaſy matter to dreſs " up an embonpoint dame of forty-ſeven in ſuch guiſe that ſhe ſhall vie for " ſhape with a ſlim damſel of ſixteen—or to invent a head-dreſs which ſhall " at once throw into ſhade a kank jaw, and cover the grievance of grey-hair, " particularly now, when powdering is out of faſhion.

" I have, however, to congratulate the fair ſeniors on the introduction of " a new faſhion, which though it cannot abſolutely make old women appear " to be young, at leaſt puts ſixty and nineteen into the ſame predicament, " by reducing both to the level of children. This is the wearing of *monitors*, " originally intended for the ſole and excluſive uſe of little miſſes, to give " them a good carriage. Some cynical obſervers may no doubt deem this " ornament emblematic of *ſecond childhood*, but the opinions of ſuch ſcoffers " go for nothing with perſons of reſolved minds, who perſuade themſelves

" that

" that it cannot be ſuppoſed ladies of mature years would adopt a mode " without proper deliberation and very good reaſons, though they may not " always be put forward. The vulgar, however, I much fear, will ſtill think " that the dreſs of ſuch people as can afford to chuſe their habiliments is " always in a certain degree characteriſtic. *Ganganelli* aſſerts that a brown " gown is the ſymbol of prudery, and it would not be over-ſtraining his " theory to ſay that a coquet may be infallibly diſtinguiſhed by an outrageous " fondneſs for pink or yellow ribbons in her grand climacteric. Some ſuch " fallen angels may be ſeen eves-dropping in the haunts of gaiety, and eyeing " the dancers aſkance, as *Milton* deſcribes *Lucifer* viewing the bleſt inhabitants " of paradiſe. Nay, we often behold a grand-mother and grand-daughter " decked out with equal fantaſticalneſs, compelling us to draw the obvious " concluſion that the one has as great a ſhare of good ſenſe as the other.

" On the obvious utility of wearing monitors it is needleſs to expatiate. " I therefore only wiſh to have them claſſed (like ſpectacles) for all ages, " merely to prevent ill conſequences. This may be eaſily done by regulations " for adapting the breadth of the ribbon to the circumſtances of each reſ- " pective wearer. It would really be an Herculean labour to attempt teach- " ing ſhoulders that have taken their bent from time to ſubmit to the unex- " pected controul of a four-penny ribbon. What would you think, Mr. " Flapper, if in ſuch a caſe we were to recur to the original wooden monitor " deſcribed by your favourite *Cowper*. This, if any thing could, would " anſwer the purpoſe; and I hope the makers and menders of faſhions will " take it into conſideration.

" But ſhould this dernier reſort prove ineffıcacious, as all the other methods " of making old women young, what is to be done?—I am actually at a loſs " to determine: and having the good of the aggrieved parties much at heart " I beg leave to recommend them to you for advice and inſtruction how to " ſupport this inevitable ill. You will tell them, Mr. Flapper, how much " more it will conduce to their reſpectability and happineſs to gain the eſteem " of the ſenſible and worthy in every circle, by a deportment and dreſs ſuited " to their years, than to attract the gaze of deriding fools, by a departure " from propriety, and a vain attempt to excite admiration by an aggravated " diſplay of infirmities.—*Montaign*, in his lively way, ſays 'old age is apt " to impreſs as many wrinkles on the mind as on the body,' but I hope " you will teach our veteran ladies to prove the poſition, in their caſe, to " be a falſe one.

" I am, Sir,
" Your conſtant reader,
" And humble ſervant,
" PHIL. AUTUMN."

I have given my correſpondent *Mr. Phil. Autumn*'s letter at full length, as containing the various turns and gradations of an abſurd and ridiculous affectation. On his laſt ſubject, that of *Monitors*, I have received many communications, and take this opportunity of laying before the public, from my ledger, an abſtract of ſome few of them. It is incumbent on me to loſe no time in publiſhing this, as, from the rapid aſcent of the line of demarkation for ladies waiſts, there is ſome reaſon to apprehend that there will ſoon be no ſhoulders on which *Monitors* can be faſtened, and that this ornament muſt ſpeedily degenerate into a cravat or necklace.

Edward Spy's letter—accompanied with a drawing. Firſt appearance of a *Monitor*, March 3d—accurate deſcription of a *Monitor*—meaſure of its breadth—poſition, &c. N. B. *Mr. Spy* a haberdaſher.

Miſs

Miſs Jenny Giggle's favour—not dated—received March 4. Her vexation on opening her grandmama's portmanteau and finding a *Monitor* there—thought her grandmama might have brought from London a more fit preſent for a girl of thirteen—Her ſurpriſe afterwards, on learning 'twas for grandmama's own wear—never ſaw any thing ſo becoming—will wear a *Monitor* for her whole life. (*Flapper* would recommend it to *Miſs Giggle* to have ſome inſtructions in ſpelling.)

Auguſtus Portly—congratulates himſelf on the great improvement in his wife's ſhoulders by wearing *Monitors*—ſome account of the difficulties of getting them on at firſt.

Francis Prudent—From the faſhion of dreſſing all ages alike *Mr. Prudent* is enabled to make three dreſſes anſwer for a wife of fifty and four daughters from twenty-ſeven to eleven. (Quere, Is it ungenteel, as *Mr. Prudent* ſays, for more than three of one family to go to the ſame party? *Flapper* wiſhes Gentlemen would not write to him on backs of letters.)

Edward Orderly—April 15th—thinks *Monitors* might mark out degrees of female rank—Lady of the blue—the green—the pink—the ſilver—the gold *Monitor*—(N. B. The ſilver age of *Monitors* commenced two days after *Mr. Orderly*'s letter—*Flapper* puzzles himſelf to know whether *Orderly* was in the ſecret.

ADVERTISEMENT.

NARCISSUS SHAMMY, ladies leather-cutter, begs leave to inform the nobility and gentry, that he has on hands the moſt copious aſſortment of LEATHER Monitors of every ſize and conſiſtency, and of all weights, from half an ounce, with an imaginary claſp, to five pounds avoirdupoiſe, with compleat ſuit of harneſs buckles. Alſo *Sole leather bracelets* with horn buttons—*Elbow-hearts*—*Guillotine Red Leather Cravats*—*Diana belts* for ladies who go hunting, &c. and every other article in the leather fancy way.

N. B. *Limerick leather dreſs boots*—kidſkin gaiters for the camp, &c.

Tom Surly—wiſhes the *Flapper* would recommend *Leathern Monitors*—thinks *Leather* might be applied with much effect to a lady's back and ſhoulders—*Flapper* thinks *Surly* a wag.

G. F.

DUBLIN:

Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.

[Price, Two Pence.]

The Editor will thankfully receive from the Friends of Literature, any communications they may favour him with on the ſubjects appropriated to the nature of this publication.

Perſons deſirous of having this paper ſent to the country, are requeſted to apply to the Clerks of the Roads at the General Poſt Office.

[A Letter Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER XXXVIII.

SATURDAY, JUNE 11, 1796.

Nec ſatis eſt, pulchra eſſe poemata dulcia ſunto.
HORACE.

THE ſubject of *Cowper*'s poetry having grown upon me beyond my expectation, I find myſelf reduced to the neceſſity of leaving my deſign abruptly incomplete, or of extending it to a third paper: A confidence in the indulgence of my readers has determined me in favour of the latter.

It is obvious that poetry owes its very exiſtence to that natural exerciſe of the human mind which is uſually termed the aſſociation of ideas. Of this in a greater or leſs degree we are all ſenſible. We look at an object—that brings another to our mind, and that another, and ſo on in ſucceſſion. We ſee, for example, a diſtant city; we are led to think of its inhabitants—to form conjectures about their occupations and purſuits—their pleaſures and their pains. We turn our view to the country, and our fancy immediately begins to range amongſt the probabilities of ruſtic life. A poet chiefly differs from a common man in the ſuperior livelineſs and juſtneſs with which he exerciſes this faculty. The greater his ability in forming theſe ideal pictures—in conceiving them with ſtrength, with nearneſs to nature and fact, and with diſcriminative ſelection—and in expreſſing what he himſelf feels ſo as to make others participate in his feelings, the more, undoubtedly, does he poſſeſs of the radical qualities of a poet.

But in order to give full delight, it is not enough that the powers of his mind merely, ſhould be employed. His heart muſt be engaged, elſe the pleaſure which he either feels himſelf, or cauſes others to feel, muſt be comparatively dull and vapid. That poet will pleaſe both moſt extenſively and moſt laſtingly whoſe affections are as vivid as his fancy is fertile—and who, while in every ſcene through which his imagination ſtrays, he finds matter for humane and tender thought, not diſcernible by vulgar minds, has only need to give vent to the genuine feelings of his own breaſt, in order to excite congenial ſenſations in the breaſts of his readers.

This then I conceive is after all the ſupreme attractive in the poetry of *Cowper*; on every occaſion he writes not merely from his fancy but from his heart; and a heart, it is evident, as widely expanſive and as tenderly ſympathetic as ever animated a human boſom. He loves to recollect at all times that he is a man, and his ambition as a poet is to be the bard of humanity. With the ſublimity of *Milton* or the changeful excellence of *Shakeſpeare* he aims at no rivalry. The ſtyle of his plain and artleſs verſe may be fairly poſtponed to the "majeſtic march" of *Dryden*, and will be thought by many to bear no compariſon with the melodious flow of *Pope*. But above them all, he claims this diſtinguiſhed honour—that his muſe is but the miniſter of his benevolence—that under his culture, Parnaſſus itſelf teems with a new growth, ſince on every ſtem he has engrafted the ſcions of charity.

Nor does the affectionate ſenſibility of *Cowper* enter into his compoſitions merely as an ingredient. It appears rather as the invigorating principle of his poetry—the ſtrong pinion on which his genius riſes to its height. *Longinus* demands certain moral qualities for his poet, without which he ſuppoſes the

character cannot be complete.—In *Cowper* we have a direct proof, such as it is painful to consider has too seldom been afforded, that the sentiment of that antient critic was exquisitely just. Had *Cowper* been less kind, less fraternally disposed to his fellow mortals, it is plain he must have been less successful in selecting—less powerful in executing his designs. If he fixes on images irresistibly interesting, his philanthropy no less than his ingenuity has directed his choice. The passages which might be adduced in support of this position are so numerous and of such equal excellence, especially in that delightful poem to which the reader may observe I have chiefly directed my view, I mean the TASK, that I dare not quote any single instance It is however impossible not to mention the descriptions of the crazed wanderer on the common—the prisoner in the bastile—and the cottage scene in a winter evening.

But the melting warmth of *Cowper*'s heart does not transfuse itself merely into scenes which are in themselves pathetic: The interest he feels in every thing human induces him to regard the most common objects as they may be connected with man, and to describe them not so much by their own proper characteristics as by their accidental relations to human pains or pleasures. Thus in mentioning

> The savage rock
> That hides the sea-mew in his hollow clefts
> Above the reach of man,

he animates what would otherwise be a piece of still life, with the transports of the returning seaman on approaching the long wished for shore—

> His hoary head
> Conspicuous many a league, the mariner
> Bound homeward, and in hope already there,
> Greets with three cheers exulting.

And when he speaks of the music of the village bells, what he dwells upon with delight is, the effect which such sounds are apt to have on the imagination.

> There is in souls a sympathy with sounds,
> And as the mind is pitch'd the ear is pleased
> With melting airs or martial, brisk or grave.
> Some chord in unison with what we hear
> Is touch'd within us, and the heart replies.
> How soft the music of those village bells,
> Falling at intervals upon the ear
> In cadence sweet! now dying all away;
> Now pealing loud again and louder still,
> Clear and sonorous as the gale comes on.
> With easy force it opens all the cells
> Where memory slept. Wherever I have heard
> A kindred melody, the scene recurs
> And with it all its pleasures and its pains.
> Such comprehensive views the spirit takes
> That in a few short moments I retrace
> (As in a map the voyager his course)
> The windings of my way thro' many years.

And through this way it is so pleasant to travel back with *Cowper*, that I cannot refrain from adding part of the just and tender reflections which the retrospect suggests, and which indeed do no more than express in the happiest manner those feelings which every worthy heart in similar circumstances has experienced.—

> How readily we wish time spent revok'd,
> That we might try the ground again where once
> (Thro' inexperience as we now perceive)
> We miss'd that happiness we might have found.
> Some friend is gone, perhaps his son's best friend
> A father, whose authority, in show
> When most severe and most'ring all its force,
> Was but the graver countenance of love;
> Whose favour, like the clouds of spring might low'r;
> And utter now and then an awful voice,

But

> But had a bleſſing in its darkeſt frown,
> Threat'ning at once and nouriſhing the plant.
> We loved, but not enough, the gentle hand
> That rear'd us. At a thoughtleſs age, allur'd
> By ev'ry gilded folly, we renounced
> His ſhelt'ring ſide, and wilfully forewent
> That converſe which we now in vain regret.

Sentiments ſuch as theſe, ſo conceived and ſo expreſſed, will I apprehend endear the poetry of *Cowper* ſo long as the tender charities which knit ſociety together ſhall be felt in the world. The effect of this ingenuity of the heart (if I may uſe ſuch a term) can never fail: It is independent of varying cuſtoms or evaneſcent prejudices, and acts upon the inborn feelings of human nature as the magnet on the ſteel. Where this is wanting, the moſt powerful talents in other reſpects have not ſupplied the deficiency. Of this *Dryden* is a remarkable inſtance—"The power," ſaith Johnſon "that predominated in his "intellectual operations was rather ſtrong reaſon than quick ſenſibility; with "the ſimple and elemental paſſions, as they ſpring ſeparate in the mind, he "ſeems not much acquainted, and ſeldom deſcribes them." We ſee accordingly that *Dryden*, admirable as he is, is applauded without being loved: He is always in the library, but ſeldom or never in the cloſet. On the other hand, *Goldſmith* is a univerſal favourite. There are not perhaps in the whole Engliſh language two poems which have been more repeatedly read, than the *Traveller* and *Deſerted Village*. And why? Is it becauſe *Goldſmith* excels in the ſublimer qualities of a poet—in grandeur of conception and in energy of expreſſion? No—It is, ſimply, becauſe he is pathetic—becauſe his affections keep pace with his fancy. And yet may we not aſſert, that while the affections of *Goldſmith* glide like a gentle rivulet, not languid certainly but ſeldom vigorous, thoſe of *Cowper* guſh forth like the profluent ſtream, and in their clear though rapid courſe, frequently riſe even above the banks of poetic regularity.

Amongſt the advantages which *Cowper* has poſſeſſed from his moral diſpoſitions I cannot overlook thoſe which he has enjoyed from his piety. In him, humanity has been ſublimed by religion, and his imagination as well as his language evidently appears to be heightened by his deep acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures. That poetry may be infinitely indebted to theſe ſtores of unſummed excellence is demonſtrated in the inſtance of the *Paradiſe Loſt*. That, which is "not the greateſt of heroic poems only becauſe it is not the firſt," never could have been written, if its wonderful author had not loved as well as ſtudied the Bible. That this was actually the caſe, and that even after long and thorough knowledge, he uſed to recur to it with freſh avidity "ſmit," as he ſays, "with "the love of ſacred ſong," we know from the record of his own immortal verſe. Much as he delighted, in the ſages of the heathen world, and to

> wander where the muſes haunt,
> Clear ſpring, or ſhady grove, or ſunny hill,

ſtill his ſupreme recreation lay in the ſacred volume;

> But chief
> Thee, Sion, and the flow'ry brooks beneath
> That waſh thy hallow'd feet, and warbling flow,
> Nightly I viſit.

And that *Cowper* has been no leſs devoted to the ſame happy exerciſe, were we even ignorant of his habits, we ſhould diſcover from thoſe ever-occurring figures of divine rhetoric, which declare at once by their peculiar character the ſingle ſource from which they could be derived.

Of the various inſtances which might be adduced, on this head, I ſhall confine myſelf to a few paſſages in the deſcription of the earthquake which ſome years ſince deſolated ſo large a part of the iſland of Sicily:

> Alas, for Sicily! rude fragments now
> Lie ſcattered where the ſhapely column ſtood.
> Her palaces are duſt. In all her ſtreets
> The voice of ſinging and the ſprightly chord

Are

Are ſilent. Revelry and dance and ſhow
Suffer a ſyncope and ſolemn pauſe;
While God performs upon the trembling ſtage
Of his own works, his dreadful part alone.
How does the earth receive him? — —
Pours ſhe not all her choiceſt fruits abroad?
— — — —
She quakes at his approach. — — —
The hills move lightly and the mountains ſmoke,
For he has touch'd them. From th' extremeſt point
Of elevation down into th' abyſs
His wrath is buſy and his frown is felt.
— — — —
What ſolid was, by transformation change
Grows fluid, and the fixt and rooted earth,
Tormented into billows, heaves and ſwells,
Or with vortiginous and hideous whirl
Sucks down its prey inſatiable.—
The ſylvan ſcene
Migrates uplifted.—
Ocean has caught the frenzy and upwrought
— — — —
Not by a mighty wind, but by that voice
Which winds and waves obey, invades the ſhore
Reſiſtleſs. Never ſuch a ſudden flood
Upridg'd ſo high, and ſent on ſuch a charge
Poſſeſs'd an inland ſcene. Where now the throng
That preſs'd the beach and haſty to depart
Look'd to the ſea for ſafety? They are gone—
Gone with the refluent wave into the deep,
A prince with half his people.

I cannot help ſubjoining a paſſage in the prophet *Jeremiah* which *Cowper* ſeems clearly to have had in view, and which appears to me to combine, in a very remarkable degree, the higheſt ſublimity of matter with the moſt perfect ſimplicity of language.

"I beheld the earth, and lo! it was without form and void; and the heavens, "and they had no light—I beheld the mountains, and lo! they trembled; "and all the hills moved lightly—I beheld, and lo! there was no man; and all "the birds of the heavens were fled—I beheld, and lo! the fruitful place was "a wilderneſs, and all the cities thereof were broken down, at the preſence "of the Lord and by his fierce anger."

After enlarging ſo much on the beauties of *Cowper* it may be expected that I ſhould take ſome notice of his blemiſhes. I ſcarcely lament that by the narrowneſs of my limits I am obliged on this particular to be very brief. I have already hinted at the frequent occurrence of paſſages, in which nothing of poetry is to be found but the form of the line. In this inſtance I conceive *Cowper* to have ſacrificed the dignity of his verſe to his earneſtneſs to do good; as on every ſuch occaſion he purſues, perhaps beyond thoſe bounds which his general plan preſcribed, ſome ſubject ſo merely moral as not to be ſuſceptible of poetic imagery; and let it be remembered that the merely theological parts of *Paradiſe Loſt* have ſubjected even *Milton* to ſomewhat of a ſimilar charge. A ſevere critic might alſo accuſe *Cowper* of dwelling in a few inſtances on ſubjects ſcarcely worthy of his pen; and I own I myſelf could wiſh, that his love for gardening had permitted him to be leſs exact in deſcribing the apparatus for a hot-bed. I fear too that his piety (a matter of infinitely more importance than all the reſt) may be leſs attractive from being marked by ſome peculiarity of opinion, and perhaps tinged by that morbid melancholy under which Mr. *Cowper* is known to have long ſtruggled. But ſtill it is ſincere—it is ardent—it is venerable—and on the whole his praiſe is, (and what more valuable can there be) that what *Johnſon* has ſaid of *Watts* may be ſaid with no leſs juſtice of *Cowper*—"He is one of thoſe few poets, with whom "youth and ignorance may be ſafely pleaſed; and happy will that reader be "whoſe mind is diſpoſed by his verſes, to copy his benevolence to man, and "his reverence to God."

L.

Printed by R. E. Mercier and Co. No. 31, Angleſea-ſtreet.

The Flapper.

NUMBER XXXIX.

TUESDAY, JUNE 14, 1796.

Strenua nos exercet inertia.

HOR.

We take trouble to avoid it.

TO THE FLAPPER.

"Down Hall, April 28.

"DEAR MR. FLAPPER,

"I SIT down to give you, if I am equal to the fatigue of the undertaking, "ſome account of a ſociety lately eſtabliſhed, called THE LAZY CLUB. "I had great difficulty in prevailing on his *Moſt Profound Heavineſs*, *our* "*Governor*, to ſign the initial letters of his name, according to law, to a "permiſſion for the purpoſe: and I have ſtill greater in perſuading myſelf "to execute it—but, I will make an effort—Heigh-ho!—

"We are at preſent only twelve, but expect to encreaſe in our num- "bers as ſoon as we announce ourſelves; many reſpectable citizens of "this metropolis, to ſay nothing of ſome elevated characters in the learned "profeſſions, being known friends to our principle. That principle is, *to* "*conſult our eaſe and quiet in every thing, and above all things*—as you will "perceive by the following

"RULES.

"No man ſhall be admitted a member who is either a tall man, a thin "man or a married man, or who is at law, or addicted to hunting, dancing, "talking politics, or playing at quoits, racket, ball, or cricket.

"If any member be guilty of any of the above offences, or of having "taken more than one ſtep of the ſtairs at a time, of having run acroſs "the ſtreet, or jumped over the kennel, of having compoſed any work of "more than four lines, or of having uſed either in writing or ſpeaking, a "longer word when a ſhorter could be had; ſuch member, on being lawfully "convicted thereof by the *nod* of his peers, ſhall be ſentenced to ſtand in the "market-houſe for two hours, or to dine two days ſucceſſively in the bar- "room of ſome noted chop-houſe, or to ſit out a night in a ſpouting club, "and to give ſecurity for good behaviour in future.

"The governor ſhall puniſh at his *Profound Heavineſs's* diſcretion, any "member who ſhall drink, or propoſe to drink, any liquor except ale, "porter or mum, or who ſhall raiſe his voice above a whiſper, or who ſhall,

" in telling a ſtory, withdraw his hand from its legitimate poſition in his " boſom or breeches pocket: alſo any perſon who makes his appearance " at the club room with creaking ſhoes, a jingling watch chain, or a " cough, or who ſhall ſing, whiſtle or beat with his feet under the table.

" The junior member preſent ſhall be obliged to ſnuff the candles, ſtir " the fire and ring the bell when neceſſary.

" No member ſhall be conveyed from one place to another within the " lamps, otherwiſe than by ſedan chairs—for travelling in the country, canal " boats are recommended, and waggons or in ſome caſes, heavy ſtage coaches " are permitted—but by no means jolting on jaunting cars or travelling " with the mail.

" By obſerving theſe rules, Sir, we are rapidly ſinking into a ſtate moſt " enviably torpid. Our preſent ſuperior has attained uncommon excellence " in the arts of *quietude:* he has been known for ſix months ſucceſſively " to fall aſleep inſtantly after dinner in his great chair, and there to remain " till ſupper-time, without ſnoring, fidgetting or talking, and, as he himſelf " ſolemnly avers, without dreaming. He loſt an handſome property in a " diſtant county, by neglecting to go eighty miles to take poſſeſſion; and " he cut off with a ſhilling his nephew for interrupting his evening nap, " though it was to tell him that his wig was juſt taking fire—for ſuch " qualities he was voted to the honours of the *pillow* at the head of our " table amidſt the approving yawns of the ſociety. We aſſemble in a " room upon the ground floor, which is thickly carpeted, and furniſhed " with moſt inviting armed chairs—we ſometimes admit a blind bag-piper " into a corner, but he is allowed to play no tune but *lullaby*, and is uſually " aſleep himſelf. Each member conſiders himſelf bound to conſult the rule " of lazineſs in all his worldly tranſactions, we breakfaſt every morning in " bed—we receive our company in bed—we read, if we are obliged to " read, in bed. Some time ſince, a catch club which meets in our neigh- " bourhood, and with which our ſociety is at mortal enmity, of malice " prepenſe contrived to raiſe the ſuſpicion of the magiſtracy againſt us. " We were aſſembled and in the very heighth of our ſocial enjoyment— " every tongue mute——every eye half cloſed——arms folded——heads de- " pending—It was fine! when a conſtable and ſix watchmen entered—It " is too much trouble, I fear, to remind you of the entry of the Gauls " into the Roman ſenate-houſe—the conſtable was amazed—the watchmen " aſtoniſhed—but the barbarians advanced—they ſounded their hideous rat- " tles—they ſeized our governor—but, Sir, his well-proved lazineſs failed " him not on this trying occaſion—on his way to the watch-houſe, thrice he " ſunk down in ſleep—when carried before the magiſtrate, he doſed—The " queſtions were anſwered by a yawn—he nodded—he ſlept.—The magiſtrate " dropped his head——juſtice ſlumbered——Good magiſtrate!——You ſhall " become a member of our club—*Moſt Profound Heavineſs!* I feel thy " influence as I deſcribe thy merits—I gape—I doubt whether I ſhall re- " main awake long enough to ſubſcribe myſelf

" Thine, ſleeping or waking,

" DENNIS DROWSY."

The

The Flapper begs leave to aſſociate with the rules of the Lazy Club for this days publication the following letter, as its object is to correct an evil, hoſtile in the higheſt degree to the arts of *quietude*.

TO THE FLAPPER.

"SIR,

"WE have of late heard much of *ſmoky chimnies*, and, thanks to the "ability of an ingenious ſtranger, this grievance has been redreſſed. But "there is another grievance, Mr. Flapper, which that gentleman has not "adverted to, though often coupled with the *ſmoky houſe*—I mean the *ſcolding* "*wife*. To give compleat fireſide-comfort I have drawn up ſomething on "the ſubject, for which I requeſt your patronage.

"A good deal of experience, as to *ſcolding wives* has been forced on "me—I have had three of them—of different ages, tempers and habits— "but all of them conſummate ſcolds. My father, who was a very de- "termined man, forced me when I was young to marry *Miſs Prudence* "*Verjuice*—a maiden lady of forty-ſix. She lived for eight years with "me in a ſtate of perpetual peeviſhneſs—ſo nervous that ſhe could bear "no ſound but that of her own voice, and ſo nice as to feel that every "thing which was done was wrong, and every creature about her a ſavage "and an hottentot. At her death ſhe left me rich enough to pleaſe myſelf "with ſomething leſs refined, and to the forfeiture of all my friends I "married *Betty Brawler*—a handſome, luſty, young woman—my own cook- "maid. Here truly, Mr. Flapper, my offence brought its puniſhment with "it—the violence of my wife's temper and the loudneſs of her tongue, kept "my houſe, and indeed the neighbourhood, in conſtant uproar for ten years, "when one day, as luck would have it, in an outrageous fit of paſſion "with her ſervant for neglecting to provide gooſeberries with a diſh of "mackarel, ſhe burſt a blood-veſſel and died immediately. My preſent "wife, *Mrs. Buſtle*, was the widow of an eminent linen-draper—ſhe had been "reckoned a notable, ſtirring, ready ſhop-keeper, and ſhe was a noted ſcold. "But by this time I had bought ſome experience—I took her in hands the "very day of our marriage—after a war of two months, with number- "leſs ſkirmiſhes and ſeveral pitched battles, my wife ſurrendered at diſcre- "tion, and ever ſince we have lived on the moſt peaceable terms. In "ſhort, Sir, my wife now is to me what the pattern-chimney at the *Dublin* "*Society's Houſe* is to *Count Rumford*, a monument of my ſucceſs and a "ſpecimen of my art.

"But I did not truſt ſolely to my own experience. Before I engaged "in writing my treatiſe I took every pains to make myſelf maſter of "my ſubject. I looked cloſely into the family concerns of my acquain- "tances—I frequented taverns and inns—I took my ſtand every day in the "fiſh ſhambles, and root markets—I followed hawkers of old cloaths through "the ſtreets, and I attended ſeveral nights at the doors of the theatre "when a crowded houſe was breaking up. By theſe means the language "of ſcolding in the lower claſſes became familiar to me; and, for that of "the higher, beſides my private opportunities, newſpapers, controverſies, "the four courts and debating ſocieties pretty well ſupplied me.

"The

" The contents of my ſeveral chapters I beg leave, Mr. Flapper, to ſub-
" mit to your inſpection, and will thank you for any hints which may
" occur: I intend to have the treatiſe printed on the ſame paper and type
" as the eſſay on *ſmoky chimnies* ſo as to bind up with it in a ſmall
" volume of *œconomics* neceſſary to all families.

" I am, Sir,

" Your very humble Servant,

" BRUIN HOLDFAST."

" *Chapter Firſt.*

" Introduction—Importance of the ſubject to health and comfort—Pre-
" judices removed—Scolding not hereditary—Not neceſſary to exerciſe the
" lungs—Or to gain reſpect from dependants—Not beſt mode of prevail-
" ing on huſbands—Story of *Miſs Molly and the Glaſs of water.*

" *Chapter Second.*

" Countenance of a ſcold from *Lavater*—Chin turned up—Noſe thin—
" Voice for ſcolding—Scolding and muſic diſtinguiſhed—Scolding and ora-
" tory—Billingſgate—Various words for one thought—Cauſes of ſcolding
" —Horror of ſilence—Nothing to do—Nothing valuable to ſay—Ambition
" —Digreſſion on *wearing the breeches*—Reading recommended as a ſubſtitute
" for ſcolding.

" *Chapter Third.*

" Claſſes of ſcolds—Periodical—Perpetual—Kitchen ſcolds—Parlour—
" Scold only huſband and ſervants—Scold every one—Progreſs of a ſcold
" exemplified in hiſtory of *Miſs Penelope Peeviſh*—Scolding *piano—forte—*
" *fortiſſimo*—Fretful ſcolds—Clamorous—Furious—Scolds who uſe action—
" *Socrates and Xantippe.*

" *Chapter Fourth.*

" *Shakeſpeare's taming of the ſhrew*—The authors treatment of his wife
" given in full—Begin early—Perſevere—Treatment of wife's relations on
" their interfering—Improper modes of cure—Expoſing before company
" cenſured—And mimickry—Never comply—Never anſwer—Deafneſs com-
" mended—Force rarely to be uſed—Confinement—Tying to bed-poſt—
" Few caſes deſperate—*Lady Loverule* in *Devil to Pay*—Symptoms of ſub-
" miſſion—Not relent—Strong liquors to be kept out of the way—Wife
" ſubdued—obeys ſignals—taught to fetch and carry—Concluſion.

a F.

D U B L I N:

Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.

[Price, Two Pence.]

The Editor will thankfully receive from the Friends of Literature, any communications they may favour him with on the ſubjects appropriated to the nature of this publication.

Perſons deſirous of having this paper ſent to the country, are requeſted to apply to the Clerks of the Roads at the General Poſt Office.

[A Letter Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER XL.

SATURDAY, JUNE 18, 1796.

Manè piger ſtertis: ſurge—

PERSIUS.

Sluggard awake—nor doze away
The richeſt moments of the day—
Awake, for ſhame———

I HAPPENED, a few days ago, to awake ſomewhat earlier than uſual, and allured abroad by the ſerenity of the morning, I mounted my horſe, and found myſelf, while it was yet twilight, at the entrance of the Phœnix Park. As I advanced I obſerved the tops of the trees to aſſume a ſplendor like that of gold; the duſky hue in which their foliage had been uniformly clad, was changing by degrees into a vivid green; and the long quivering blades of graſs, hung with dew drops, now glittered with the brilliancy of gems innumerable. The landſcape appeared to expand before me; new objects were becoming viſible every moment, and each object appeared as if freſhly painted in the richeſt colouring. I was admiring theſe beautiful *phænomena*, which ſurprized me the more becauſe I had never before obſerved them, when, happening to turn round, a ſight ſtill more admirable preſented itſelf. The ſun was juſt riſing from the ſea, over the ſmooth face of which he ſeemed to pour a broad ſtream of liquid gold. The eaſtern hemiſphere, glowing with the moſt brilliant colours, exquiſitely blended and perpetually changing, was finely contraſted by the gloom that ſtill covered the mountains which on either ſide encloſe the bay of *Dublin*: here and there, however, ſome of the numberleſs whited villas that ſpangle the borders of their duſky ſkirts, began to catch and to reflect the upward-ſlanting ſun-beam. In the fore ground, the river paſſing juſt below me, glided along in a current of ſilver, 'till it loſt itſelf in the city, now juſt emerging, with its ſpires and cupolas, from the fog that had before enveloped it. I was delighted at the ſcene, and as I returned homewards could not help reprobating the cuſtoms of the day, which, by making early riſing almoſt impracticable, rob the world of an enjoyment ſo exquiſite.—" Abominable cuſtoms," thought I, " which " cheat us of the better part of our exiſtence—unnatural cuſtoms, which " burying the prime of the day in ſleep, drive us, for moſt of our employ- " ments and all our recreations, into the night!" So fully did the ſubject occupy me that it was ſcarcely diſplaced by the ſucceeding buſineſs of the day; and when I retired to reſt, and the buſineſs of the day in its turn gave way to ſleep, fancy, reaſſuming its dominion in my mind, and working (as it delights to do) on the recently received ideas, preſented the following VISION:

I thought myſelf placed beneath a tree, in the ſame place where I had firſt beheld the ſight that ſo charmed me: and while I remained in deep contemplation, my attention was ſuddenly awakened by a voice, which in a tone

clear and loud, but inexpreſſibly ſoft and muſical, called me by my name. I looked up, and ſaw, deſcending from a cloud of purple, which had lowered itſelf almoſt to the ground, a female form, youthful as Hebe, and charming as the picture which the poets give of the queen of beauty herſelf—her ſaffron-coloured robes, of a texture light as air, were ſoftly agitated by a thouſand gentle breezes that played around her. With an air of mild dignity, and a ſmile that was more than human, ſhe approached and thus addreſſed me:

"Mortal, the being whom thou ſeeſt before thee is the goddeſs appointed "from the beginning of time to open the gates of the Eaſt—to uſher in "the glorious Sun—to announce his approach to the world—to chaſe from "before him the duſky clouds of the night, and to beſpread his path with "carpets of celeſtial workmanſhip. Thee I condeſcend to make the witneſs "of my complaint; thee, whom I have long known not negligent of the "boons I offer to thy race—Often, as I paſſed over thy dwelling, have I "obſerved thee at my firſt approach, ſtarting from the bed of ſloth to renew "thy benevolent labours: often as I paſſed, have I ſmiled unnoticed on thy "labours.—Thine be it to hear, to record, to publiſh to thy world, the "complaint of the DEITY OF THE MORNING.

"Glowing with perpetual youth, decked in magnificence, to which the "triumphal entry of an eaſtern conqueror is not to be compared, I make my "daily approach—A ſublimer ſpectacle the earth never witneſſed; thou haſt "juſt beheld it, and with a rapture that beſpoke it new to thee; yet is the "ſame ſcene preſented daily, nor is this dawn more lovely than thoſe which "for ages have preceded it. The melody of birds without number, wel-"comes my arrival—every beaſt of the foreſt, every flower of the field, "receives me with gladneſs—all nature mourns my abſence, and joys in my "return—all but man. To this thy country, and eſpecially to this thy city, "do I come adorned in peculiar luſtre: yet mark my reception.—I traverſe "the ſtreets ſo lately thronged with mankind—and they are as a deſert. I am "avoided as a peſtilence—every dwelling is ſtill, and impenetrable barriers, "carefully interpoſed, refuſe admiſſion even to my paſſing ſalutation—or if "any is awake to behold my entrance, it is the wretched and the profligate "—It is the rake, who, as he reels homeward from the long protracted "debauch, the brothel, or the gaming-houſe, in broken ſentences pours forth "his lewd inſults againſt that light which compels him to ſuſpend his works "of darkneſs. Or it is the hapleſs female whom man's artifice has betrayed, "whom ſociety with inexorable ſternneſs caſts from its protection, and "throws upon the world, the unpitied victim of infamy, and poverty, and "diſeaſe—ſhe, as ſhe raiſes her head from the cold ſtone, the comfortleſs "pillow which the ſurly guardian of the night ſcarcely allowed to her en-"treaty—ſhe curſes the light that terminates the ſhort oblivion of her woes, "and hates my chearful beams as if they mocked her miſery.

"Is it for ſuch, that this ſpectacle is daily diſplayed? yet ſuch are its only "witneſſes. The world of taſte, of ſcience, of beauty—it is buried in ſleep: "And yet it might be expected that the eye of taſte would receive delight "from ſuch ſcenery as this, painted on the boundleſs expanſe of Heaven, "by nature's choiceſt pencil; or its ear be gratified with the celeſtial melody "that attends my ſteps. And the pupil of ſcience, whoſe honourable labour "is directed to encreaſe the happineſs by extending the knowledge of man-"kind—did he but know the value of the favours he neglects—he would "ſpare the midnight oil, and obtain, by daily attendance upon me, what

I only

" I only can beſtow—thoſe golden hours of tranquil contemplation, that " elaſticity of ſoul and command of thought, which fly the noon-day buſtle, " and die away in the languor of the evening.—The fair, too, whom cruel " and abſurd faſhion drags from her repoſe, to paſs the natural hours of reſt " in the midſt of noiſe and diſſipation; her delicate conſtitution, poiſoned by " the noiſome effluvia of the thronged aſſembly, her tender frame expoſed " half clad to the chilling vapours of the night——how do I deſire to re- " ſtore to her that beauty which art cannot reſtore—to light up anew the " dimmed luſtre of her eye—to recall the faded colour to her cheek! In " fine (for longer parley is forbidden me) I come fraught with bleſſings " for all. To the man of manifold occupations I bring leiſure—length of " of days are mine to beſtow—I can point out the ſure path to riches " and honours; above all, health—ſo often ſought in vain from drugs and " minerals, ſo often unſucceſsfully purſued from climate to climate—health " ever accompanies me and freely beſtows her ineſtimable gifts among my " faithful votaries. Tell then the world of taſte, of ſcience, of beauty— " tell all who ſeek for honours or riches, or long life, or moſt precious health " ————But Phœbus, mounting apace, calls me to my never ceaſing office; " I go, to traverſe wide ſeas and meaſureleſs tracts of land—deſpiſed by " the poliſhed nations of the world, I haſten to thoſe regions where man, " uncivilized and uncorrupted, awaits my approach with impatience, and " welcomes my appearance with homage.—Remember, and farewell."

Here the goddeſs ceaſed ſpeaking, and retired to the cloud which waited for her; it, ſpreading itſelf around her and concealing her from my view, aſcended ſlowly, and moving towards the weſt was ſoon out of ſight. I was returning homewards, methought, deeply muſing on the beautiful viſion which I had ſeen, and whoſe accents ſtill ſounded in my ears, when I was ſuddenly awaked by my ſervant, announcing to me, in a tone of voice not quite ſo divine, that my uſual hour of riſing was come—in obedience to the commands I had received, I haſtened to collect and arrange the circumſtances of this ſingular Viſion.

But ſtrongly as I am diſpoſed to become an advocate for ſo excellent an habit as that of early riſing, I can ſcarcely flatter myſelf with the expectation of making many converts ſo long as the preſent modiſh diſtribution of the twenty-four hours ſhall prevail. Nor is there any proſpect of a reform, if it be true, as I am informed, that at a great breakfaſt given a few days ago in the neighbourhood of this city it was near three o'clock before the politeſt part of the viſitors arrived; and that as the company was returning home to dreſs for the remainder of the day, two coaches were nearly overſet by running foul of each other, owing to the darkneſs of the night. Nay, no later than yeſterday, I myſelf received a card of invitation from a family of quality with whom I have the honour of an acquaintance, on which was written " dinner at " half paſt ſix;" and, by the way, I muſt obſerve, for the benefit of my country readers, that " half paſt ſix," in ſuch caſes, means " half paſt ſeven;" and that, were I ſo ignorant as to take it literally, and repair to Lord ——'s at the hour appointed, I ſhould probably be received with a ſtare by an half-dreſſed footman, ſhould find myſelf an interruption to the ſervants in arranging the drawing room, and be left alone to admire the pictures or the furniture for a whole hour before any of the family would think of making their appearance. Indeed, from the progreſs which the faſhionable hour of

dining

dining has made within theſe few years, I am half inclined to adopt an opinion which I have heard, that the evil, in proceſs of time, will cure itſelf: and that, as the preſent hour of dinner, for inſtance, already touches the confines of the ſupper time of our fathers, ſo it will proceed to travel through the night, 'till it reaches the ſucceeding morning and comes round again at length to its old ſtation of twelve o'clock at noon. So far has it proceeded already, that the faſhionable day has almoſt changed places with the natural.—And would it not be an enterprize well worthy of ſome daſhing genius of the *haut ton* to complete the change at once?—nothing is more eaſy—it is only to make a bold ſtride of three or four hours—to give a breakfaſt by moon-light, for inſtance, or to iſſue cards for a midnight fete and dinner—the thing would be new—it would be whimſical—it would be *ſtiliſh*—therefore it would be imitated. What an advantage would this be to the *beau monde?* the *bourgeois*, whoſe aukward attempts to keep pace in folly with their betters is ſo ridiculous, would be completely diſtanced—poor ſouls!—they could not afford to part with the light of the ſun—it is cheap, and to thoſe who are obliged to labour it certainly has its advantages—but what has the faſhionable world to do with the light of the ſun? flambeaux and wax candles are infinitely genteeler. Then beſides, as one part of the community will always be aſleep while the other is awake, it is clear that there can be but little intercourſe between them—and ſo much the better for both—ladies may roll through the ſtreets in ſplendid equipages without having their tender hearts wrung by miſerable objects of poverty, to whom they abſolutely cannot afford the leaſt relief, though the wretches are ſo unreaſonable as to expect it; and on the other hand the poor mechanic may walk about his buſineſs without the riſk of being juſtled into the kennel by the footman who ſwaggers before his miſtreſs's chair, or if he takes the mid-ſtreet for ſafety, of being over-looked by my lord from the exaltation of his Phæton, and trampled beneath his horſes' feet.—For my part, I feel it my duty ever to accommodate myſelf to the convenience of my patrons; and therefore, ſo ſoon as this improvement ſhall take place, I will give directions that the Flapper, in order to hold its place as a companion at the polite breakfaſt table—may be ready for publication before ſun-ſet.

* * *

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[A Letter Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER XLI.

TUESDAY, JUNE 21, 1796.

Nemo ſine vitiis naſcitur.

HORACE.

No child of man is faultleſs.

ALTHOUGH there are many in a ſavage ſtate, and ſtill more in a ſtate of exceſſive refinement, who exhibit ſcarce any ſign of a moral ſenſe, yet I think it may be reaſonably doubted whether there ever did exiſt a rational being without ſome diſcernment of right and wrong, or without ſome controul reſulting from ſuch diſcernment.

To live and to act without any moral reflection—or, perceiving the obligations to which our nature is ſubject, uniformly to violate them without ſome compunction, is, I believe, a degree of monſtrous depravity beyond the limits of human degeneracy.—However that may be, it cannot be doubted but that the great bulk of mankind carry about them an internal monitor to whoſe juriſdiction they cannot plead, and whoſe judgments they cannot entirely eſcape, and perhaps it is amongſt the moſt ſtriking of thoſe moral difficulties, of which familiarity with the effect abates our wonder as to the cauſe, that many acknowledge the dominion of ſo vigilant, ſo auſtere, and ſo active a ruler, yet habitually tranſgreſs its precepts, and apparently deſpiſe its judgments.

The modes by which conſcience is deceived, ſoftened or eluded, furniſh a courſe of moral ſpeculation of the moſt intereſting and comprehenſive kind. The whole life of a philoſopher might be worthily devoted to ſo edifying

an inveſtigation, and volumes might be well compoſed without exhauſting the ſubject. If I were to hazard a haſty conjecture, I would ſay that the two principal means of eluding the dominion of conſcience, and thoſe to which all others are in ſome degree reducible, are ſelf-deceit, and ſelf-indulgence which ſoon grows into habitual frailty. To the former the proud man is moſt liable, to the latter the indolent—by the former the operations of conſcience are ſuſpended, by the latter they are enervated. The proud man ſcorns to decline the trial, he defies his adverſary, he admits the atrocity of the charge, and invokes the heavieſt ſentence if he be guilty; but he ſuborns witneſſes, he diſcolours facts, he perverts law, and he perſuades himſelf that becauſe he has deceived the judge and eluded the judgment, he has not been guilty of the crime. The indolent man pleads guilty to the charge, he acknowledges the offence, but extenuates it, he repents of his tranſgreſſion, but repeats it—he inſenſibly loſes all pain ariſing from the ſenſe of ſelf-reproach, and is abſolved from all moral reſtraint but that which proceeds from an inſtinctive repugnance to human miſery. Conſequences the moſt certain, and evils the moſt heavy, if they be not quite obvious, or if they be at all remote, are not conſidered, and therefore are not felt. To ſuch a man the diſaſters in which his frailty of to-day may in a month or in a week involve his family or his friends, are contemplated, if he at all contemplates them, like an earthquake at the extremity of the globe, or the maſſacre of armies related in the hiſtories of diſtant ages.

Of theſe two characters the former ſeldom can become contemptible; the latter never can become great.—The tranſgreſſions of the former are not ſo frequent, but they are more flagitious, and though he is more likely to diſcharge his duties, yet is he more capable of ſetting conſcience at defiance, of effacing the boundaries of right and wrong, and ruſhing without reſtraint to the very extremities of human depravity.

As the contemplation of ourſelves materially aſſiſts our knowledge of others, ſo is ſelf-knowledge much promoted by conſidering the nature of beings like ourſelves. I recommend it to the man who is proud of moral perfection to look abroad, and then conſider whether it be likely that he is the only human being who never tranſgreſſes—Whether undeviating rectitude be a practicable attainment or a rational boaſt—Whether there be not danger that he, who

flatters

flatters himſelf with the idea of being always rectilineal and progreſſive, adminiſters to his arrogance by ſhifting the objects of his purſuit, and even perverting the very end of his deſtination—Whether it be not the ſquinting of his mind which diſguiſes the obliquity of his courſe, and whether his deviations may not be the more dangerous the leſs they are perceived.—Whether he is likely to improve who does not acknowlege any thing to be corrected, and whether the energy by which an ardent and heroic mind repairs failings by virtues, is not neceſſarily ſurrendered by him, who never admits that he is called upon for any uncommon exertion, that he has any arrears of duties to be diſcharged, or any miſconduct for which he is bound to make compenſation.

To the indolent and frail man, who can ſcarcely boaſt of any virtue but candour, and who exerts no fortitude but in the acknowlegement of his vices, it is almoſt hopeleſs to ſuggeſt any means of ſelf-improvement—he daily becomes more and more a machine—the force of habit counter acts the ſuggeſtions of experience, and he finds it leſs painful to purſue the path which has ſo often led him into vice and into miſery than to ſuſtain the effort of turning away from it—he wiſhes happineſs to all, but how can he adminiſter to the comfort of others, whom the ſlighteſt temptation can divert from the firmeſt reſolution, and whom preſent objects and ſelf-gratification ſolely engroſs?

Againſt ſelf-deceit and ſelf indulgence thoſe two powerful adverſaries to human rectitude and human improvement, may I not truly ſtate that the moſt efficacious- if not the only effectual antidote, is to be derived from the chriſtian religion? that religion which humbles pride and dignifies humility—which quenches ſelf-love and kindles philanthropy—which expands our hearts to univerſal ſympathy, and opens our boſoms for univerſal inſpection—which is a deadly foe to all diſguiſe and to all inſincerity—which renders an acknowlegement of our weakneſs the great foundation of our ſtrength, and which furniſhes unceaſing motives of the moſt perſuaſive kind, to vigilance and to exertion—which ſtrips vice of its allurements, and virtue of its auſterity—which fortifies us againſt the blandiſhments of proſperity and the rigours of adverſity, and which holding perpetually before our view the unfading bleſſings of a future ſtate, and teaching us the certainty of their exiſtence,

and

and the practicability of their attainment, renders us indifferent about the preſent, except as far as it may influence the future—and can enable us to purſue without deviation an object to which we muſt be convinced there ought to be no rival in our hearts.

S.

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The Flapper.

NUMBER XLII.

SATURDAY, JUNE 25, 1796.

Ne ſutor ultra crepidam.

Let not the cobler go beyond his laſt.

TO THE FLAPPER.

" MR. FLAPPER,

" THOUGH now a mechanic, I was intended for a learned profeſſion, " and got my rudiments at a free-ſchool in the county of Kerry, where it " was my expectation to have been in the courſe of time an uſher, and alſo " a ſizar in the college—but the death of my friends cut ſhort my hopes. " I was however bred at college, *id eſt*, that is to ſay, as ſervant to a young " gentleman of our county, a fellow commoner, but not half ſo much of " a ſtudent as I was.—This liberal education had given me a taſte for learn- " ing, and a love of ſtudy far more ardent than, as it now appears even to " myſelf, was ſuited to the duties of my profeſſion. Indeed my wife, a very " good ſort of woman, though perfectly illiterate, has often told me ſo; " and when I ſpent my mornings, as I frequently did, in reading Euclid, " *ars cogitandi*, and Ovid's Metamorphoſes, has aſſured me that thoſe abo- " minable books, as ſhe was pleaſed to call them, would infallibly bring " ruin on myſelf and family—that my affairs were going hard and faſt to " rack, and that it would be fitter for me to overſee my workmen, who in " my abſence did nothing but idle, and to inſtruct them in their neceſſary " buſineſs, than to toil as I did for my own inſtruction in things which would " never bring me in a farthing, but which, on the contrary, would ruin " both my trade and my credit—To all this palaver I oppoſed my logical " arguments, and we generally parted in ill-humour.

" Yeſterday at dinner, being *tête a tête*, as the French call it, with my " dear, though dull, helpmate, whoſe converſation would certainly languiſh " without the aid of diſpute, the uſual topic was brought forward with " ſomewhat too much aſperity on her ſide, when, vexed and provoked to hear

" my darling occupations reviled, I retorted rather acrimoniouſly, and my " gentlewoman roſe from table in a ſort of huff, leaving me alone with a " pot of porter before me. On her departure my agitated ſpirits ſunk into " a calm, and, having thus driven my antagoniſt out of the field, I fell into " a triumphant contemplation on the high and honourable advantages of " literature in every ſphere of life, from the higheſt to the loweſt, from the " king to the cobler.

' Why,' ſaid I to myſelf, ' becauſe we are poor, and obliged to toil for a ' livelihood, ſhould we ſuffer our minds to languiſh in ignorance?—Why ' ſhould all our care be confined to our brutal part to the utter excluſion of ' that which is ſpiritual?—Is not the body inferior to the ſoul, and ought ' not its betters to be ſerved before it?—But Greek and Latin, ſay our an- ' tagoniſts the ignoramuſſes, will take off our attention from the buſineſs ' of our calling—and why ſo! In the time of the Greeks and Romans, ' when every one ſpoke Greek or Latin, did not trade equally flouriſh, and ' were not manufactures brought to ſo high a degree of perfection that a ' Roman ſandal would at this day ſell for more than forty pair of ſhoes?— ' and then the credit of it!—many there are who make ſhoes as well as I ' do, but few—too few! who join ſcience with ſhoe-making—am I not, as ' Horace has it, pointed at wherever I go? *monſtror digito!*'

" Theſe profound reflections, and a few draughts of porter, preſently threw " me into a ſort of doze,—I nodded—drowſed—and finally fell into a " ſound ſleep, out of which however I was, as I thought, ſuddenly wak- " ened by hearing the following words uttered in a voice, the ſweetneſs of " which went to my heart:—' Bryan—Bryan'—for that, Sir, is my chriſ- " tian name from my grand-father by the mother's ſide, a great ſcholar and " a clergyman.—Seeming now to open my eyes, and ſtaring attentively, I " ſaw before me the loveliеſt figure I had ever beheld, appearing to be a " youth under twenty, and, if I may ſo ſay, clothed in light—on his ſhoul- " ders were two wings, of a colour not to be deſcribed, from which, and " from his heavenly beauty, I preſently gueſſed him to be an angel.— ' Bryan—Bryan,' repeated he, ' attend to my words—I am thy guardian ' ſpirit, and come for thy inſtruction.—Thy fooliſh vanity and ſelf-conceit ' muſt be repreſſed, or ruin awaits thee!—Thou art, it is true, more learned ' than thy equals, but aſſuredly not more wiſe—In thy trade of a ſhoe-maker ' what haſt thou to do with any language but thine own? Will the ſcraps ' of philoſophy, which thou haſt gleaned in college, teach thee to know ' where the ſhoe pinches?—Will geometry add preciſion to thy laſt, or ' logick perſuade thy tortured cuſtomers that they are well and properly ' fitted?—Will Virgil's bees better wax thy thread, or the wit of Ovid ' ſharpen thine awl?—Nothing of all this—but thy fond hankering after ' learning will make thee neglect thy trade, and thy wife and children, who

" might

'might live by the ſweat of thy brow, will ſtarve on the labour of thy brain '—What alſo is thy boaſted knowledge?—Chaff without ſubſtance—words 'without ideas—offals picked up from the kennel of the literary market!—'But even hadſt thou gone through a regular courſe of education how 'wouldſt thou have been the better for it?—Sharpen thy ſight, and behold 'the conſequence of breeding to genteel profeſſions thoſe whoſe circumſtances 'had fitted them for tradeſmen.' I looked, and lo, in a garret, or rather "cockloft, which had formerly been papered, dirty beyond deſcription, "and in many places open to the ſky, a miſerable and emaciated figure "appeared ſitting on a joint-ſtool at a tottering three-legged table, dreſſed, "or rather undreſſed, in a ragged coat, which bore upon it ſome few traces "of its original black, and diſcovering his vocation by a ſoiled and tattered "band—a ſcallop-ſhell full of ink ſtood before him, and a few mouldy books; "from which he ſeemed to be eagerly extracting or copying on a quire of "whited-brown paper. A noiſe of lamentation was heard without—the "door opened, and in came a half-ſtarved female, clad in what apparently "the pawn-broker had refuſed, with an infant at her breaſt, and followed "by two ſqualling children.—'Huſband,' ſaid ſhe, in a voice interrupted by "ſobs, 'we are all ſtarving!—the baker refuſes any farther credit—give 'me—O, give me a ſhilling to buy food!'—'Woman,' replied he 'why 'doſt thou interrupt me?—Thou well knoweſt that the quarterly ten pounds 'are already expended, the laſt ſix-pence having been almoſt all laid out 'in paper—take, however, this two-pence, which I got in change, and 'take heart; for the charity ſermon, which I am now penning—and well-'fitted, Heaven knows, I am for ſuch a compoſition! will get me a charac-'ter, and that character may poſſibly procure me a living—I ſhall extort 'tears from the eyes, and gold from the pockets of all my hearers, and as 'I am aſſured, *my Lord* himſelf will be preſent!'

"With theſe words, which, I confeſs, afforded me very little hope, to my "great ſatisfaction the ſcene changed, and I was ſuddenly tranſported into "the hall of the Four-courts, which was then thronged with lawyers and "their clients—ſeemingly induſtrious as bees, the hurry of occupation was "every where viſible, and the hive reſounded with the buzz of buſineſs!—"Surely, ſaid I, here at leaſt every one is rich, ſince every one is buſy!—'Miſtaken man,' replied my guardian!—'This hall, by whoſe operations 'others are impoveriſhed, is, to by far the plurality of its frequenters, a 'ſeat and ſource of poverty.—Some few indeed there are who riſe to ſplen-'did fortunes, but nine in ten had better have been bred tinkers—a lottery 'is here held of many, many blanks to one prize!—The generality of thoſe, 'whom you now behold with buſy looks and airs of importance, have for 'many years paſt been pacing this hall with empty bags and empty bellies, 'no buſineſs but in their faces, and perpetually toiling to learn a ſcience 'which they have no chance ever to practiſe.'

"Again

"Again the ſcene changed, and it was plain from its being now ſhifted "to an apothecary's ſhop, that I was about to take a leſſon in phyſic, when "a violent noiſe of talking in the entry rouſed me from my ſleep, and at "once diſſipated my dream—and now my wife entered with a frighted "countenance, and the following terrific words:—'There, Bryan—ſee "what your learning is come to!—I was a fool—was I?—but I could fore-"ſee for all that!—the ſheriff's officers have laid an execution on the houſe, "and we are all undone!' My terror may better be imagined than deſ-"cribed—indeed it was exceſſive!—A moment's recollection however "brought with it the comfortable aſſurance that, as my credit was little, "my debt could not be great, and that I had many friends in the neigh-"bourhood—among theſe I called to mind an honeſt and rich, though "illiterate huckſter, whoſe ignorance I had often derided, but to whom I "had been more than once indebted for the kindeſt offices.—To him I ap-"plied—bail was given, and, for the preſent, the ſheriff's officers were "diſmiſſed—I hope alſo *for ever*, as I am now determined to bid adieu to "learning, and ſend you theſe lines as a warning to others to beware of the "rock on which had well-nigh ſplit

"Your dutiful ſervant,
"To command,
"BRYAN O'CRISPIN."

"P. S. I have taken up the O, as a learned antiquarian friend of mine (in-"deed I am a piece of an antiquarian myſelf) has aſſured me that the Criſpins, "though very long out of date, were originally a princely family of Ireland, "and the firſt who taught their countrymen to cover their feet with leather, "a practice however which has, for ſome centuries paſt, been diſuſed, or "confined almoſt excluſively, to the rich.——The holy ſaint, patron of our "corporation, was of this family."

N.

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The Flapper.

NUMBER XLIII.

TUESDAY, JUNE 28, 1796.

Jura negat ſibi nata, nihil non arrogat armis.

HORACE.

——— Sir, ſays he, I wear a ſword.

THE PROVOKED WIFE.

" SIR,

" HAVING lately ſeen one of your papers, which treated of duelling, " an art which I have profeſſed and practiſed almoſt from my infancy, I have " been induced to trouble you with a letter on the ſubject, and to lay before " you the unpleaſant ſituation in which I find myſelf moſt unexpectedly in- " volved. Though in the paper, to which I have alluded, you have ſneered " a little at us gentlemen of the piſtol, yet upon the whole you have treated " us with more civility and good humour than we have been accuſtomed to " experience from writers of your deſcription; and I have been thereby en- " couraged to repreſent candidly to you the motives of my conduct, and the " diſappointment of my expectations.

" I was born in the aſſizes town of a weſtern county, and am the younger " ſon of a man, who, though in moderate circumſtances, ranked as a gen- " tleman, and educated his children in the perſuaſion, that gentility, or as " he expreſſed it, what was *gentlemanlike*, comprehended every excellence. " I was not naturally quarrelſome, but my father from my earlieſt years had " ſtrenuouſly inculcated the maxim, that a gentleman ſhould never brook an " affront; and I was therefore habituated to the perſuaſion, that it was my " duty to hazard my own life and that of my deareſt friend, ſhould he hap- " pen to trench upon thoſe lines of dignity by which I conceived the cha- " racter of a gentleman to be ſurrounded.

" The firſt eſſay of this galiant ſpirit was occaſioned by a diſpute at a " dancing ſchool about places. I had drawn my number from the hat, and " was preparing to take poſſeſſion of my allotted ſtation, when another boy, " who had drawn a larger number, intruded himſelf into my place. Though " ſtill a boy, I had begun to imagine myſelf a man, and the anecdotes which " I had frequently heard detailed and applauded had made me deſirous of " ſome fair opportunity of diſplaying my ſpirit. I reſolved, therefore, to de- " mand ſatisfaction as a gentleman, inſtead of having recourſe to the vulgar " revenge of a ſchool-boy. The challenge was accepted; but our great " difficulty was to provide piſtols, for we were yet too young to be indulged " by our friends in the privileges of manhood and gentility. At length we

 procured

" procured a ſingle piſtol, and this we determined to uſe alternately, until " the laws of honour ſhould be ſatisfied. As it was the firſt occaſion on " which either of us had abandoned the harmleſs combats of boys for the " more honourable, but more dangerous, conteſts of men, we were ſatisfied " with a ſingle diſcharge on each ſide; and whether it was occaſioned by the " cautious diſtance at which we took our ground, or by our inexperience in " the management of our common weapon, no miſchief was done.

" This incident was ſoon generally known; and though my friends affected " to reprimand me, I eaſily perceived that they were pleaſed at this dawning " of a ſpirit, which was to brighten my future days with the ſplendid cha- " racter of a gentleman and a man of honour. Encouraged by the reſpect, " which I ſoon perceived that I had acquired, and more particularly by the " attentions of the young ladies at the dancing-ſchool, I determined to " become a profeſſed duelliſt.

" For this purpoſe, out of the ſavings of my allowance, I purchaſed a pair of " the beſt piſtols, and ſtudied with the utmoſt accuracy the preciſe quantity " of powder which would carry the ball point-blank to its object. When " I had by repeated trials aſcertained the charge of my piſtols, and was " tolerably certain of hitting a card at the proper diſtance; I chalked out " the figure of a man on a ſtable-door, and employed myſelf in acquiring " the farther improvement of hitting at pleaſure any part of the human " body. My education was now completed, and though I did not yet feel " any diſpoſition to ſeek for a quarrel, yet my mind having been uniformly " directed to one object, which ſeemed to form the grand diſtinction of " character, I ſecretly wiſhed that ſome occaſion might preſent itſelf of " reducing my knowledge to practice. In the idleneſs of a country-town it " could not be long before ſuch occaſions would occur; and various were " the combats in which I found it neceſſary to engage, or forfeit for ever " the character of a man of ſpirit. At length my character was eſtabliſhed, " and in my own town and neighbourhood I was regarded as a young fellow " of unqueſtionable courage.

" My pride, elevated by the reſpect with which I was treated, and by the " good fortune with which I had eſcaped, now led me to ſearch with jealouſy " in the conduct of my aſſociates for what might be conſidered as a cauſe of " quarrel; but ſuch was my acknowleged ſuperiority that I could find no " farther opportunity of exerciſing my proweſs. Either their behaviour " was ſo guarded that I could not conſtrue any part of it into an affront; " or their ſubmiſſion ſo ready that it diſarmed my vengeance. Though " this was the very point to which I had propoſed to attain I felt " myſelf diſſatisfied. I became tired of that fame which was confined " within ſuch a narrow circle, and determined to enter into the world.

" An opportunity preſenting itſelf of purchaſing an enſigncy in a regiment, " a part of which happened to be quartered in the town, I became an officer, " and hoped that I was placed in a ſituation in which my ſpirit ſhould be " rewarded by a larger portion of admiration. This hope I ſoon found " reaſon to diſtruſt. The firſt time I dined at the meſs I happened, with the

" confidence

" confidence of a young man who had lately given the *ton* in a country-
" neighbourhood, to expatiate on the favourable reception which I had ex-
" perienced among the ladies. My brother-officers liſtened with ſome im-
" patience and incredulity, until at length I inſinuated that I ſtood high in
" the eſteem of a young lady who was related to a lieutenant in the regi-
" ment. The lieutenant however, did not in an inſulting manner deny the
" truth of what I had hinted, but coolly obſerved that he had too favour-
" able an opinion of his couſin's good ſenſe to allow him to think it neceſ-
" ſary to contradict what I had ſaid. A provocation ſlighter than this ſarcaſm
" would have been ſufficient to have warranted the indulgence of my favou-
" rite propenſity. I challenged the lieutenant, we fired together, and I
" wounded him in the arm. I now flattered myſelf that I had eſtabliſhed my
" character in the regiment, and that I ſhould thence-forward be treated with
" the moſt profound reſpect. But great was my diſappointment, when I diſco-
" vered, on taking my place at the meſs, that no one addreſſed himſelf to me, or
" replied to my obſervations. I was ſtung to the heart at this treatment. Hi-
" therto, though I had been a duelliſt, I had never been the aggreſſor. I had
" at firſt been induced to fight through compliance with the opinions of thoſe
" with whom I lived; habit and the vanity of ſucceſs had by degrees induced
" me to catch more eagerly at what I deemed juſtifiable, opportunities of fight-
" ing. But I now found myſelf impelled to paſs the boundary within which I
" had hitherto confined myſelf, and to force a quarrel upon thoſe who had not
" offered me any direct inſult. I fought three of my brother-officers in ſuc-
" ceſſion; but at laſt, after receiving two wounds of ſome conſequence, I
" began to think it was vain to continue among a ſet of people againſt their
" wiſhes, and ſold my commiſſion.

" Thus diſappointed in my favourite expectation of maintaining the dig-
" nity of a gentleman amongſt a body who might all be ſuppoſed equally
" tenacious of their own honour, and equally diſpoſed to reſpect the cha-
" racter of a man of ſpirit, I repaired to the metropolis, hoping to appear
" with more *eclat* upon a wider theatre. For ſome weeks I diligently culti-
" vated ſome reſpectable connections of my family, by which I expected to
" be introduced into genteel company, but found that my character as a
" duelliſt had travelled before me, and that I was univerſally regarded as
" *a dangerous man*. Thus, thrown out from domeſtic ſociety, I connected
" myſelf with a few idle young men, who either from being corrupted by
" vicious habits could not reliſh the intercourſe of a family, or had been
" debarred from it by accident, or, like me, by prepoſſeſſion. With them
" I frequented taverns, and became a member of gaming-clubs. But even
" in this ſociety, compoſed as it is of the habitually corrupted or of the
" outcaſts from domeſtic life, I begin to find myſelf an unwelcome member.
" I have been on different occaſions induced by ſome circumſtance or other
" to call out ſome of my companions to the field; and I can learn from the
" commendation beſtowed on ſome paſſive characters with which I am ac-
" quainted, of being *ſafe men to get drunk with*, that this conduct has given
" offence. What can I do, Mr. Flapper, or what can I think? From my

" childhood

" childhood I have been taught that a gentleman ſhould not ſuffer himſelf to " be inſulted. I know that I was not conſidered when a boy as of a quarrel- " ſome diſpoſition, and if I have at any time been forward in commencing " a quarrel, I have acted under the influence of that ſpirit which I had been " taught to venerate. The conſequence has been, that I have been ſucceſſively " excluded from every part of that world, with which I had endeavoured " to connect myſelf. Is the opinion of the world different from that of the " place of my education, or does it approve this practice only to a certain " degree? How may a man determine how near it is neceſſary that he " ſhould approach to the character of a duelliſt, in order to maintain his " eſtimation in ſociety; and at what point he muſt ſtop, leſt he ſhould be " avoided as an object of terror? Could you give me a ſatisfactory opinion " on this ſubject, you would by ſo doing greatly oblige

" Your obedient,
" Humble ſervant,
" CORNELIUS O'FEATHERSPRING."

It has probably not eſcaped the obſervation of my readers that my correſpondent has with the ordinary partiality of mankind deceived himſelf in his eſtimate of his own character. While he imagined himſelf only ſupporting the character of a *man of ſpirit*, he was gradually converted into the *bully;* and it is natural that the ſober and rational part of mankind ſhould withdraw themſelves from ſo dangerous an aſſociate. Indeed ſo acknowleged is the tendency of the former character to degenerate into the latter, that when a young man has been induced to fight two or three duels, he is preſumed by the peaceable part of the public to be a bully without farther evidence, and avoided. This inconvenience it is not eaſy to guard againſt. The principle of duelling can claim no foundation in reaſon, and muſt therefore be liable to all the fluctuation and inconſiſtency of popular opinion. I am however inclined to hope that the embarraſſments of my correſpondent have ariſen from a gradual *wearing out* of the principle upon which he has acted; that mankind have begun to diſcover the folly of the practice, and though they have not yet acquired a ſufficient degree of good ſenſe to enable them directly to condemn the principle, they yet diſavow it indirectly by their diſlike of the man who has acted to its full extent. I would therefore recommend to my readers to conſider, whether the yet remaining influence of this practice might not without much difficulty be removed by the ſpirited co-operation of the rational part of the public.

E.

DUBLIN:
Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.
[Price, Two Pence.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER XLIV.

SATURDAY, JULY 2, 1796.

A SHORT time ſince I received two letters on the ſame day from a huſband and wife, appealing to me reſpecting a conjugal quarrel: I am of opinion that I cannot ſerve my worthy correſpondents more effectually than by publiſhing both their epiſtles, as the mutual peruſal of them may poſſibly produce a better effect upon the parties than any advice I could give to either. I therefore inſert the gentleman's letter to-day, and ſhall reſerve that of the lady for a future opportunity.

TO THE FLAPPER.

Les livres quadrent mal avec le mariage.

MOLIERE.

The curſe of curſes is a learned wife.

SIR,

"A YEAR has ſcarcely paſſed ſince I was a jolly and happy bachelor, "delighting in field ſports with all their accompanyments, and conſequently "ſpending my life in the country, where I was beloved by my neighbours, "who liked my wine, and fondly reſpected by my tenants, to whom I was "a kind landlord.—But man can never be contented, and nothing would "now ſerve me but that I muſt marry, and get an heir to my eſtate, of "which I was the more deſirous as I had quarrelled with my brother, a very "fine gentleman about town, and conſequently a good-for-nothing fellow. "With this view I was determined to ſee the world, and rode poſt to Dublin, "where no great change in my dreſs was neceſſary, as my hair was already "cropped, and my light hunting boots anſwered very well for full dreſs.

"Not having many acquaintances in town, on the evening of my arrival "I went to the play, and that no time might be loſt looked attentively "round the boxes, which were then crouded on account of a new actor from "London. In one of theſe I ſpied a young lady who greatly hit my taſte, "in ſpite of her monſtrous dreſs, which however I found was only faſhion-"able, for I had not been in town ſince waiſts were *left off*: enquiring who "ſhe was, I diſcovered, with much ſatisfaction, that ſhe was daughter to a "*Doctor Booker*, a phyſician of eminence, and a diſtant couſin of my own. "I now ſqueezed into her box, and got myſelf introduced—room was made

" for me—I ſat by her, and liked her better and better.—The next morning " meeting with a friend, I was by him informed that ſhe was a good girl, " without much fortune—none of the town flirts, but, on the contrary, per- " fectly well, and even elegantly educated. Satisfied with this account, I " viſited, was well received, and, to make the matter ſhort, propoſed—was " accepted—and in a fortnight's time carried my wife down to the country.

" The firſt month paſſed as all firſt months do; but in the beginning of " the ſecond I was ſomewhat alarmed by the arrival of five carts loaded with " books, which were brought up into my wife's dreſſing room, and carefully " placed on ſhelves that had been provided for the purpoſe, and from this " unfortunate hour Madam turned out a learned lady!—O, Mr. Flapper, " can there be a greater curſe in marriage than when all the learning is on " the woman's ſide?—I, who was taught to ſhoot before I could ſpell, and " to ride long before I could read, am no way a match for her, and of this " ſhe ſhews herſelf perfectly ſenſible by deſpiſing my ignorance—Now for a " man to be deſpiſed by his wife is indeed the very devil!—and yet I am not " ſo ignorant neither; for I have read Voſter's Arithmetick, Bracken's Far- " riery, and for amuſement, two whole volumes of the Fairy Tales—I write " as you ſee, very decently, and read tolerably well, to myſelf—and as for " ſpelling, the gentlemen of the neighbourhood apply to me when they make " bets about it—I can beſides caſt accounts with any man, which is more " than ſhe can do, though ſhe tells me ſhe has ſtudied the mathematicks— " this indeed I know by ſad experience—not a hap'worth of good does ſhe " do about the houſe—no bill was ever yet totted up by her before it was " paid. When the old houſe-keeper knocks at her dreſſing room door, and " tells her through the key-hole that ſhe is come to ſettle the weekly accounts, " Madam is reading, and deſires not to be teaſed—when the ſame gentle- " woman, (an old ſervant of my mother's, and luckily for me, perfectly honeſt) " aſks her what ſhe will pleaſe to have for dinner, ſhe peeviſhly replies—' any ' thing—don't torment me with your nonſenſe!' nay, even when the mantua- " maker comes to try on a new gown, or the agent to pay her quarterly " allowance, ſtill Madam is reading, and deſires that the gown and the money " may be left at the door!—In ſhort, reading is her only occupation, except " when ſhe prattles about her books, which laſt is the worſe of the two, as " ſhe reads by herſelf, but talks with me.

" Some months ago I thought to pleaſe her by bringing her acquainted " with the curate of the pariſh, who I ſuppoſed was of her own kidney, but " him alſo ſhe deſpiſes, becauſe, forſooth, he ſometimes goes a hunting " with me, and has choſen for her companion the pariſh prieſt, who jabbers " bog-Latin to her.—But in truth it is as impoſſible for me to pleaſe as to un- " derſtand her, and I might juſt as well have married ſome outlandiſh lady, " ſince her language is wholly unlike mine, and to me perfectly unintelligible. " —All this however, is not yet the worſt—Madam muſt needs be a politi-

cian

" cian too—gets the newſpapers from Dublin, and bores me by deſcanting " upon every foreign article; and, when, the other day, I begged her to " read to me the news from the Curragh, and an account of the winning " horſes, ſhe told me with a ſneer, that ſhe would obey my commands, as it " was moſt natural I ſhould wiſh to hear of my kinsfolk. I fear alſo ſhe is " a piece of a republican; for ſhe loves the French, whom I deteſt, and " ſometimes talks in ſuch a way as makes my fleſh creep—but of this I will " ſay no more, leſt it might bring both her and me into a ſcrape—ſuffice it to " ſay that we always differ in opinion, and fight like cat and dog.

" Such, Sir, is the miſery of my ſituation, which is made ſtill worſe by " a fooliſh circumſtance that I am almoſt aſhamed to mention—but the truth " is, that, as, hang her, ſhe is very pretty, I cannot help loving her with all " her faults.——And now, Mr. Flapper, try what you can do for me—give " her a little wholeſome advice—it may be of uſe, as ſhe thinks well of you, " gets your paper down by the poſt, and ſays that you are highly eſteemed in " town.—Tell her that learning is only fit for men, and even among theſe " chiefly for parſons, and that it would be leſs ridiculous for her to dreſs in a " gown and caſſock than to give her *verdict* upon books and their writers.— " Warn her againſt politicks in theſe tickliſh times, and civilly hint to her " that, ſince women can never be parliament men, they have nothing to do " with them.—Aſſure her alſo that, ſince a plain country gentleman, who en- " deavours to make all happy about him, to encourage induſtry and repreſs " vagrants, and who amuſes and ſtrengthens himſelf with his gun, his dogs " and his horſes, is a far better and more uſeful man than any town puppy " of them all with his debaucheries of every kind, and his cards, and his " dice, ſhe ought to bleſs her ſtars for having united her to

" My dear Sir,
" Your moſt reſpectful,
" And I hope ſoon to ſay,
" Moſt grateful humble ſervant,
" SYLVESTER HAWTHORNE."

There is one claſs of my correſpondents to which I think myſelf particularly bound to expreſs my acknowlegements, becauſe, from the very little uſe I have hitherto made of their communications, they might think themſelves neglected—I mean thoſe who have favoured me with ſhorter pieces of poetry and *morceaus* of literary criticiſm. I beg leave, therefore, to obſerve that I place a very high value on ſuch favours, and that I am determined to avail myſelf of them, whenever, from the accidental brevity of an eſſay, I can command a vacant ſpace in my paper. This being the caſe to-day, I am happy to preſent my readers with an original paraphraſe of one of the epigrams attributed

buted to Martial, which was put into my hands a few days ſince by its ingenious author, who is one of my moſt valued correſpondents. For the ſake of the learned reader I prefix the Latin epigram.

Martialis, Lib. 4. Epig. 78.
In Varum,
Invitatorem vanum.

Ad cænam nuper Varus me forte vocavit;
Ornatus dives, parvula cæna fuit.
Auro, non dapibus, oneratur menſa, miniſtri
Apponunt oculis multa, pauca gulæ.
Tunc ego, non oculos ſed ventrem paſcere veni,
Aut appone dapes, Vare vel aufer opes.

Imitated.

To one who gave dinners ſplendid but ſcanty.

Invited one day to a dinner in ſtate,
I found a magnificent ſervice of plate;
But gueſs at the grief of a poor hungry ſinner
When the diſhes uncovered exhibit no dinner;
In each a poor pittance, than ice not much warmer,
Appeared like a dwarf in a giant's bright armour:
With ſilver not victuals the table was preſs'd,
And the ſervants well frizzl'd, well powder'd, well dreſs'd,
Who like mutes in ſeraglio attended the treat,
Set down much to admire and but little to eat.
Then I to my hoſt, my good Lord let me tell ye,
I came hither to feaſt not my eyes but my belly;
Nor can my ſharp ſtomach tho' one of the beſt,
Like that of an oſtrich your metal digeſt.
This rich apparatus my longing augments
So ſend it away or increaſe its contents;
For at ſix in the evening, tho' not of the *quorum*,
I prefer a cook's ſhop to a ſilver-ſmith's ſhew-room.

N.

DUBLIN:
Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.
[Price, Two Pence.]

[*In purſuance of the Plan formerly announced to the Public, the* NEXT NUMBER *of the* FLAPPER *will be publiſhed on Saturday the 9th of July, and the Work will be continued weekly on Saturdays, until the firſt Saturday in November, after which Day it will be continued twice in each Week, as uſual.*]

The Flapper.

NUMBER XLV.

SATURDAY, JULY 9, 1796.

TO THE FLAPPER.

"SIR,

"MY maid, *Lydia Sift*, a very honeſt and ſenſible girl, and by no "means illiterate, who never fails to give me an exact account of every "thing that paſſes in the family, having juſt now aſſured me that, by this "poſt, *Mr. Hawthorne* means to diſpatch a letter to you complaining of "my conduct, and particularly reprobating the attention I pay to my books, "which, as he pretends, entirely ſupercedes the care of my family concerns, "I think it neceſſary, in order that you ſhould not be prejudiced, or, as the "French ſtyle it, *prèvenu*, againſt me, to accompany his complaint with "this my apology, which will, I truſt and doubt not, as I write to a man "of letters, entirely juſtify me, and throw the blame there, where alone it "ought to lie.—And firſt, Sir, I muſt premiſe that my father, *Doctor Booker*, "is a man of conſummate erudition, who, though he profeſſes medicine, "has, by inceſſant ſtudy, rendered himſelf equally an adept in every ſcience "from the profound depths of metaphyſics and mathematics to the ſublime "ſoar of poetry, and even to the fantaſtic flights of muſic.—His perfect "knowledge of the human mind ſoon enabled him to diſcover in me a parity "of organization, and a genius, upon the extent of which humility forbids "me to expatiate, and, as I was conſequently his favourite child, for I am "ſorry to ſay my brothers were unlike their ſire, he took a pleaſure in teach-"ing me all he knew, that is to ſay, every thing. In this excellent courſe "of education it was natural that I ſhould lead a recluſe ſort of life, and ſo "indeed I did, 'till my aunt, a woman far more worldly wiſe than literate, "took it into her head to adviſe that I ſhould dreſs, and ſhew myſelf in "public, in order, as ſhe ſaid, that I might be ſettled in the world with all "that advantage and eclat which my perſonal charms appeared to merit and "to claim—for feeling as I do the little worth of beauty it would be falſe "modeſty in me to deny that I was extremely pretty.—This idea was not, "I confeſs, unpleaſing to me, as the natural tendency of youth will ſome-"times prevail over the moſt cultivated intellect, and accordingly I was "dreſſed, and carried to a play, where it was my fortune, whether good "or bad I will not yet determine, to be ſeen and admired by my couſin "*Hawthorne*, who got himſelf introduced to me, and with a rapidity that "appeared to me rather indelicate, made his propoſals, which were, by the

" interference of my aunt, who never adverting to my education, thought " his fortune more than a match for mine, ſpeedily accepted, and, in leſs than " three weeks after our firſt interview, I was married, and hurried down to " the country. Here the novelty of my ſituation, the conſtant occupation " of receiving and returning viſits, perhaps alſo the extreme fondneſs of my " huſband, but more eſpecially my being deprived of my books, which I " had not had leiſure to bring with me, rendered me capable of reſiſting for a " whole month the *tædium* of idleneſs and diſſipation—at the end however " of this period my darling books arrived, and I was reſtored to myſelf.— " What wonder then if, after ſo long a ſeparation, I ſhould rejoice in the " company and converſe of my newly recovered friends?—I did ſo, it muſt " be confeſſed—but what had I to abſtract me from them? a huſband, hand- " ſome indeed and loving—but profoundly ignorant—noiſy neighbours, " whoſe merriment made me ſad, and who talked of nothing but hunting " and ſhooting—the company of women bred to make puddings, and the " ridiculous pedantry of an ignorant ſporting parſon, who, for the honour " of his cloth, wiſhed to converſe with me, but knew not how. Contention " now eked out converſation, and diſputes aroſe between *Mr. Hawthorne* " and me—he pretended that I ſpent all my time in reading—I replied, that " I had no other rational way of ſpending my time.—' You neglect, Madam,' " ſaid he, ' your family affairs.'—' You, Sir,' anſwered I, ' pay an incom- ' parable old woman for the purpoſe, and really I was never taught to know ' the prices of kitchen-ſtuff.—You prefer the pariſh prieſt to my friend the ' doctor'—' The prieſt is a rational being with ſome information, and the ' curate is an uncultivated idiot.'——' You, Madam, perpetually diſpute ' with me in politics, with which ſurely I have the better right to be ac- ' quainted.' ' There, Sir, you labour under a two-fold miſtake, for right ' you have none, and it is You, who perpetually diſpute with me.' And " indeed I ſhould never contend with him on this head, if he would only " abſtain from contradicting me, and from abuſing my favourite Athenian " form of government, without ſo much as knowing in what degree of lati- " tude Athens is ſituate.—Such, and many more, are our uſual ſubjects of " debate, which are ſeldom diſmiſſed without ſome ill-humour on both ſides, " as it is, you know, impoſſible for me to conceal my contempt, and as he " has not yet learned to bear it with perfect patience. I am, however, it muſt " be confeſſed, rather tired of this perpetual contention, and, ſince, with all " his deficiencies, I cannot help allowing him many excellent qualities, far " ſuperior to that ſuperficial one which he poſſeſſes of a handſome perſon, " and frankly owning that I have much regard for the goodneſs of his heart, " I am not aſhamed to ſay that nothing would make me more happy than a " reaſonable compromiſe, the preliminary articles of which I will now briefly " mention, that being in effect the principal object of my letter, and ſhall " beg of you to propoſe them to him, *as from yourſelf.*—If *Mr. Hawthorne* " will immediately take into his family ſome learned perſon of my father's " recommendation, by whom he may be taught ſuch matters as may in ſome " degree enable him to converſe with me, and under whoſe tuition he will " engage to read, at leaſt, three hours in the day;—If he will be ſo kind as " never to contradict or diſpute with me, excepting only on ſubjects, where " I may allow his knowledge ſuperior to mine;—If he will ſell his horſes,

and

" and hang his hounds, give away his ſpaniels and his guns, and for ever " abjure the ſociety of thoſe country-gentlemen, who ſo ſadly brutalize him, " and annoy me—I, on my part, do faithfully promiſe, in return, carefully " to over-look the family accounts, and thus reduce my algebra to vulgar " arithmetic—to act in conjunction with the frightful old houſe-keeper in " ordering dinners, and correcting bills of fare,—and, even, if he ſhould " be ſo barbarous to inſiſt upon it, however great the ſacrifice may be, to " read but half as much as I have hitherto done.—And, ſince my books " appear to be the great objects of his unaccountable averſion, reſerving " only one hundred and fifty favourite authors, *deeper than did ever Plummet* " *found to drown the reſt!*

" By your propoſing theſe reaſonable articles, to which he cannot poſſibly " object, you will have the pleaſure of reſtoring peace and happineſs to a " diſturbed family, and I ſhall have that of ſubſcribing myſelf,

" Learned Sir,
" Your moſt grateful,
" Humble ſervant,
" SOPHRONIA HAWTHORNE."

" P. S. I cannot entirely agree with you in your partiality towards *Cowper* " —his poetry appears to me not ſufficiently elevated above the groveling " level of common ſenſe—he is alſo entirely deficient in that enchanted and " enchanting obſcure, which is undoubtedly the true ſource of the ſublime— " and, as for his tranſlation, there is, in my opinion, no novelty in it— " it is too like the Greek."

TO THE FLAPPER.

" SIR,

" I encloſe you an imitation (which has never appeared in print) of a well " known ode of Horace, but which, if you deem it worth inſertion in your " valuable paper, is very much at your ſervice. I have no habitual tenden- " cies to poetry, and yet at ſome ſeaſons of my life I have felt momentary " glows which I could almoſt wiſh to have retained. What I now ſend to " you occurred to me almoſt ſpontaneouſly at a period when, on ſome " account very remote from any thing poetical, my mind was particularly " agitated. Having at different times ſince made ſimilar attempts without " ſucceſs, I have been induced to think that I was chiefly indebted to the " general excitement of the occaſion.

" I am, Sir,
" Your humble ſervant,
" J. DULLMAN."

HORACE, BOOK II. ODE XX.——Imitated.

Upborn on wings untried before,
Thro' liquid plains of light I'll ſoar,
No more on earth to dwell;
Cities with all your ſplendid ſcenes,
Deluſive joys but real pains,
Receive my laſt farewell.

Eſcap'd

Eſcap'd from envy's tainted breath,
And all the ills that ſwarm beneath,
I'll ſeek my native ſky;
For tho' eſteem'd of lowly birth,
I am not form'd of vulgar earth,
Nor was I born to die.

Mæcenas, beſt of friends, adieu—
My wond'rous change e'en now you view—
The downy plumage ſprings;
My feathers all of ſnowy white—
And eager to begin my flight
I clap my ſounding wings.

Now a ſweet warbler of the ſky
Thro' trackleſs waſtes of air I fly,
And pour my ſtrains along;
And whilſt around the muſic floats,
The liſt'ning nations catch the notes,
And echo to my ſong.

From clime to clime I'll wing my way,
Each clime tranſported with my lay
From Ganges to the Rhine:
Bards ev'n beneath the frozen pole,
Shall breath forth ecſtaſies of ſoul
In ſtrains reſembling mine.

My vaſt career ſhall know no bound,
From pole to pole my voice ſhall ſound,
And the wide world attend;
Nay, worlds unknown ſhall hear my name,
And ev'ry age atteſt my fame,
'Till time itſelf ſhall end.

No more my friends your Horace mourn,
I need no pile, no fun'ral urn,
Sepulchral rites were vain;
And let each kindred cheek be dry,
'Twere impious to lament while I
Immortal honours gain.

AD MAECENATEM.

NON uſitata, nec tenui ferar
Penna, biformis per liquidum aethera
Vates; neque in terris morabor
Longiùs; invidiâque major
Urbes relinquam. non ego pauperum
Sanguis parentum, non ego, quem vocas
Dilecte, Maecenas, obibo,
Nec ſtygiâ cohibebor undâ.
Jamjam reſidunt cruribus aſperae
Pelles; et album mutor in alitem
Superne: naſcunturque leves
Per digitos humeroſque plumae.
Jam Daedaleo ocior Icaro,
Viſam gementis litora Boſphori,
Syrteſque Getulas, canorus
Ales, Hyperboreoſque campos.
Me Colchus, et, qui diſſimulat metum
Marſae cohortis, Dacus, et ultimi
Noſcent Geloni: me peritus
Diſcet Iber, Rhodanique potor.
Abſint inani funere naeniae,
Luctuſque turpes, et querimoniae:
Compeſce clamorem, ac ſepulchri
Mitte ſupervacuos honores.

N. L.

DUBLIN:
Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.
[Price, Two Pence.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER XLVI.

SATURDAY, JULY 16, 1796.

" Euge" et " belle" hoc excute totum
Quid non intus habet ?

PERSIUS.

A charming boy, they cry; what genius! ſpirit!—
Search you his *mind*, and then decide his merit.

IT is a well-known truth that impreſſions made during the early part of life take the ſtrongeſt hold on the memory, and that the diſpoſition of the man generally depends on the principles which have been inculcated, and the habits of thinking and of acting which have been eſtabliſhed in his childhood. To inculcate then, at this impreſſive ſeaſon, principles which are juſt, and to eſtabliſh habits which are uſeful, are the great ends of education in general, and the value of each particular ſyſtem is to be aſcertained by the degree in which it is fitted to attain thoſe ends. Other advantages may be incidental to a good education, but theſe are its eſſentials.

To croud into the minds of children maſſes of words, of facts, of dates or of tables is not the main buſineſs of early education: the utmoſt information which can in that ſeaſon be communicated is trifling, when compared with exciting a deſire for knowledge, or improving the capacity for acquiring it with greater facility and to greater extent. Learning itſelf is indeed no farther valuable than as it tends to regulate conduct, to promote the happineſs of individuals and to enlarge the comforts of ſociety. Fortunately however for mankind, there is no neceſſity for comparing and contraſting the different advantages of education, ſince from judicious ſyſtems founded on ſalutary principles no one of them is excluded. The actual communication of elementary information ſerves as a foretaſte, to ſtimulate the appetite which it does not ſatiate—by the exerciſe of the underſtanding in apprehending and inveſtigating it, the faculties are naturally improved and invigorated—the value of diligent application is taught by the delight ariſing from that knowledge which is its fruit—and he who has laboured with ſucceſs in the acquiſition of learning will find, that he has eſtabliſhed in himſelf the moſt uſeful habits of practical virtue—that he is patient and temperate—that his heart is expanded and his affections are tranquil—that he loves truth and deſpiſes ſenſuality.

In any ſyſtem, where information is communicated, and yet a fondneſs for knowledge is not the reſult—where literature is taught and wiſdom does not follow—I always ſuſpect ſomething erroneous in the principle on which ſuch ſyſtem is founded. I am much miſtaken, if this be not the caſe with ſchool education as at preſent managed with us. The difficulty of engaging the attention of children to that of which the real utility is not at the time perceived, has made teachers have recourſe to modes which ſolicit their more

powerful affections, and take more violent hold on their paſſions. The principle of *fear* for a long time tyrannized in our ſchools, until at laſt experience ſhewed, that though compulſion might inform, it did not improve, and that a horror of puniſhment ſoon produced an antipathy to ſtudy. This ſyſtem of *fear* has of late given place to a ſyſtem of *glory*. The principle of emulation is that on which all our modern ſyſtems of ſchool-teaching are founded, and public examinations, honourable competition, premiums and praiſe, are the modes now in uſe to make boys take delight in knowledge, and acquire the habits of virtue. The pre-eminence of this liberal principle above that which has been in a great meaſure exploded is unqueſtionable, but I think it may be doubted whether emulation is fitted to do all which is intended by it, or at leaſt whether it's doing this is not counter-balanced by diſadvantages, which on the whole make the application of it, in the degree in which we uſe it, ineligible.

This principle cannot be expected to operate univerſally, and while in ſome boys it operates too ſtrongly, in others it does not ſeem to operate at all. Thoſe of the ſame form quickly learn their comparative rates: ſuch as conſider themſelves unable to contend, with a chance of ſucceſs, for honours, ſoon acquieſce in contented ignorance and inferiority; while thoſe few, among whom the competition is expected to lie, remain, as if by general agreement, without any effort of preparation, 'till within a few days of that on which diſtinctions are to be obtained, and reward to be diſtributed. I have often perceived that the beſt ſcholar in his claſs was alſo the moſt idle, from the preſumption he with reaſon entertained, that a very ſlender effort could make him certain of the premium; and I have known a father not merely reconciled to his neglect by his honours, but proud of that very idleneſs which gave proof of ſuch brilliant talents by ſuch ſlight application. But comparative merit is certainly no teſt of poſitive, nor is ſucceſs at the examination an infallible proof even of ſuperiority in learning. In a deciſion to be formed after a few minutes trial much room is left for chance to interfere—a facility of expreſſion, and a readineſs in the exerciſe of the faculties often turn the balance againſt greater information ſlowly brought into act and confuſedly delivered. Other qualities too, beſides thoſe of the intellect, often conduce much to compel notice, or to bias judgment. No man was ever a ſpectator at a horſe-race without becoming intereſted in the event, and againſt what I may call this natural unfairneſs of an examiner, no precaution can be effectual. But when, amidſt the anxiety of relations, and the ſtare of ſtrangers, *Maſter Bluſh* and *Maſter Forward* ſtand up, before a formal—perhaps a moroſe examiner, to whom they are now for the firſt time introduced, it is not difficult to ſee that the conteſt is unequal. They may be aſked queſtions in grammar or in proſody, but the examination is a trial of their nerves as much as of their learning.

It is only by comparing a boy with himſelf that you can judge of his diligence and real improvement, but a public examination placing the idle, the timid, and the dull all on the ſame level, gives a practical encouragement to what is culpable, while it ſtigmatizes the infirmity which is natural, and the gentleneſs which is commendable. Be the competition too ever ſo cloſe, the diſproportion of victory to defect is incalculable: the lottery has but one great prize, and all the reſt, even that which ſtood with it to the laſt, are blanks. If the number of prizes be encreaſed, ſo that no competitor ſhall go without

one,

one, (which ſeems to be the plea of our advertiſing ſchool-maſters) reward becomes of no value except to gratify the idle vanity of relations, and the examination ſerves only to exhibit the numbers at the ſchool, and give their names to the public. I expect to receive the thanks of all the idle ſchool-boys in the kingdom, when I pronounce *ex cathedra*, that no father ſhould be angry with his ſon for not obtaining a premium: but I requeſt of all whom it may concern, to inform the young gentlemen of the *proviſo* on which I make this declaration, viz. provided it ſhall appear, that the boy has exerted himſelf with due diligence, and employed his time to real advantage.

The rules for judging on ſubjects of literature which this principle brings along with it are extravagantly ridiculous. *Dick Popular*, who keeps a regiſter of all his ſchool-honours, and entertains his company with a corrected copy of his juvenile performances, has reduced literary queſtions to mathematical certainty, by founding his deciſions on the rules of *vulgar arithmetic*. He has no other teſt of the merit of a new work, than the price paid by the bookſeller for the copy-right, or of an old one, but the number of editions it has gone through—without any allowance for a technical ſubject, for a large impreſſion, or a publiſher's trick. The profeſſional knowledge of a divine he eſtimates by the number of charity ſermons he has preached, and that of a phyſician by his ſtanding at the time when he ſet up his coach. The ſong which is *encored* muſt with him be the beſt muſic in the opera, and the brilliant *ſpectacle*, by carrying the pantomime through a certain number of nights, gives it a character of unequivocal merit. Though he never attends the debates, he knows the relative importance of every member of the ſenate, for he has a regular liſt of all the chairmen of committees, and a table of the number of times each member has been on his legs; but it is with great regret he has of late diſcovered the decay of loyalty in England, by the number of addreſſes preſented, on the attempt made againſt his Majeſty's life laſt year, falling ſhort, by two out of one hundred and eighty-ſeven, of thoſe preſented on a ſimilar occaſion ſome years ſince. *Dick* is the firſt man to congratulate a friend on his being taken notice of (whatever be the occaſion) in the public prints, which he peruſes with great attention and equal credulity, though I found his faith a good deal ſhook ſome time ſince, by an injury his health had received from the uſe of quack medicines. I took that occaſion of lending him the farce of *the Critic*, and thought I had fully expoſed to him the arts and myſteries of *puffing*: but I apprehend he is again as bad as ever, for I know he has provided himſelf with one of *Packwood's Razor Strops*, and yeſterday I met him juſt going to viſit *the mouſe coloured rook* which we are told in Wedneſday's Hibernian Journal, *is in poſſeſſion of the Printer and Publiſher of the New Geography and Gazetteer No.* 89, *Upper Coombe*—on that day it was ſaid there were only 1500 ſubſcribers to this work, but by this time I am ſure my friend's intereſt muſt have increaſed them conſiderably. The cauſe of his relapſe was explained fully, when on his taking a newſpaper from his pocket to ſhew me the *Gazette Extraordinary*, I found he could turn to no paragraph, but that which gave an account of the public examination held at an academy near town, where *Maſter Popular* was honoured with three premiums, and had cut for a certificate.

But ſuch ridiculous abſurdities in critical judgment, bear no compariſon with the ſerious effects in morals, which may ſometimes be traced to this principle

ciple of emulation carried to exceſs. In childhood—for I am not adverting to ſyſtems of education for perſons of more mature age, where the evils of the principle, if it be not antecedently ingrafted too deeply, may by various checks be effectually counteracted—in childhood, I ſay, there is danger, leſt on the calling in of a ſtronger paſſion to the aſſiſtance of a weaker, the means ſhall ſubdue and ſupercede the end. When it is hoped that knowledge ſhall be ſought as productive of glory and reward, it is not ſo certain that a love of knowledge will be inſpired, as that the love of praiſe will be augmented. Hence bye-roads are opened to the latter which do not lead through the former, and cunning is ſet at work to impoſe ſuperficial ſmattering for ſubſtantial knowledge, mean and fraudulent tricks are practiſed at ſchools, and vanity comes into the world, not barely tolerated, but commended by the principles of early education, and eſtabliſhed by its practice.

But inſtances are not wanting of paſſions more malevolent originating in this cauſe. Young *Famelove* and young *Fretful*, were the heirs of eſtates which were adjoining—they were play-fellows in their infancy, and from the intimacy between their families each was held up as a pattern to the other. At ſchool they were competitors, but their friendſhip was not interrupted, until near the time of one examination, when *Fretful*'s health not allowing him to exert himſelf, his adverſary by redoubled diligence acquired a marked ſuperiority. *Fretful*, though his ſchool-fellows did not concur in the opinion, thought this treatment ſo ungenerous in his friend, that neither his conſtitution nor his temper perhaps ever recovered it. He ſoon however regained the honour he had loſt, for *Famelove*, elated with his victory, of courſe relaxed his aſſiduity. In college, the conteſt of glory was carried on with various ſucceſs, according as the indiſpoſitions and irritation of the one, or the idleneſs and confidence of the other gave advantage to the competitor. There through the officious malice of flattering followers, reporting acrimonious expreſſions, and offenſive ſtories of each to his opponent, the intercourſe which had ſubſiſted between them was dropt, without expoſtulation, and indeed without regret. But, habitual rivals as they were, they could not look on each other with indifference: diſcarded friendſhip gave place to contemptuous averſion, to envy and to enmity. Scarcely had they ſettled on their eſtates, after quitting college, when theſe diſplayed themſelves in all their horrors: a diſpute aroſe about their boundaries, which lying in an uncultivated moraſs, any mode of tracing them was impoſſible—neither party would ſubmit to arbitration, and the deciſion of the law would be too ſlow. The diſpute—with all their rivalſhip—and with their lives—was terminated by a duel. *Famelove* died on the field, and *Fretful*, whoſe feelings could not bear the fatal event to which he had brought the companion of his youth, did not long ſurvive him. The immediate cauſe of their death was known to the public, but thoſe, who had watched them from their infancy, did not fail to to acknowlege the influence of ſomething more remote—of an injudicious ſyſtem of education, which led to malignant hatred in their maturity, by encouraging envious competition in their childhood.

F.

DUBLIN:
Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.
[Price, Two Pence.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER XLVII.

SATURDAY, JULY 23, 1796.

Still pleas'd to praiſe, yet not afraid to blame.

Pope's Eſſay on Criticiſm.

IN a company where I ſpent the evening a few days ſince I was much entertained by a young gentleman's reciting *Collins's Ode on the Paſſions.* This young gentleman poſſeſſes many natural advantages for ſuch an exhibition—a a clear and ſweet voice, a countenance flexible and impreſſive, and an authoritative command of a very graceful perſon. He has alſo a reſolute underſtanding which will think for itſelf, with a judgment which teaches him that this may be done without always thinking differently from others. I was well pleaſed with the exhibition, for I knew him well enough to be ſatisfied that the cultivation of his taſte and the improvement of his powers in this way did not interfere with a diligent attention to buſineſs of more importance. His recital was not the mimickry of any of our public performers, while the manner of it was happily clear of all affected ſingularity. The only fault I perceived, was that which is common to all young performers—too violent an exhibition of the vehement paſſions.

I remember that when I read this *Ode* ſome years ſince I had not formed a judgment of it ſo favourable, but being now much ſtruck with it on the recital, I began to ſuſpect that I might have decided formerly on a careleſs view. I therefore on my return home took it up for more minute examination—the reſult ſatisfied me that my preſent ſuſpicions aroſe entirely from the excellence of my young friend's performance, and that my former opinion of the *Ode* was not ill-founded. To the public, who received ſo favourably the critical obſervations on the poetry of *Cowper*, a diſcuſſion of the merits of this well-known compoſition may perhaps not be unacceptable.

The ſcheme of the *Ode* ſuppoſes, that *the Paſſions*, who had often thronged about the cell of *muſic*, liſtening with ecſtacy to the leſſons of her art, at ſome one particular time, fired beyond meaſure, ſnatched from the ſurrounding myrtles her inſtruments of ſound, and each proceeded to prove his own powers of expreſſion. This fiction, thus delivered in proſe, cannot but appear unnatural and extravagant. To perſonify the *paſſions* is not denied to the poet, but his *paſſions* ſhould then perform a part allegorically expreſſive of their peculiar character, and their actions ſhould be ſuch as are natural to human agents under their influence. Thus when *Collins* in his *Ode to Fear*, deſcribes *Danger howling amidſt the midnight ſtorm, or throwing himſelf on the ridge of ſome looſe hanging rock to ſleep*—or when in his *Ode to Mercy*, he deſcribes her *ſitting by the awful ſide of valour, and hiding in wreaths of flowers his blood-ſtained ſword* —he is juſtified in theſe beautiful fictions: for his *perſonified danger* he has choſen a ſituation where *real danger* would exiſt, and to his *ideal mercy*, he has attributed an act in which a *merciful man* would take delight. But when

in his *Ode on the Paſſions* he makes *Anger ſtrike the lyre*, or *Joy play on the viol*, when he makes *Melancholy blow the horn*, or *Hope give a ſong*, we are diſguſted at a conceit which overlooks all emblematic character, and violates all dramatic probability.

Was it to reconcile us to this fiction, that the author tells us, *the Paſſions* were actually gone mad?

> Each, for *madneſs* ruled the hour,
> Would prove his own expreſſive power—

what acts would, and what would not be natural to them in this ſtrangely-imagined ſtate, it certainly is not eaſy to ſay—but the fiction itſelf is a groſs confuſion of the abſtract with the concrete. It makes *the Paſſions* not merely *imagined perſons* but *human beings*—at leaſt it attributes to them occaſionally the diſtempers of human infirmity. A ſuppoſition ſurely like this outrages all allegory, and he who could be mad enough to admit ſuch a juſtification can meet with no abſurdity which might need to be juſtified.

Collins poſſeſſed admirable powers for deſcribing the paſſions—ideal perſonages abound in all his writings, and in his other lyric works, there are ſome of the moſt exquiſite characteriſtic ſketches of ſeveral of the affections, but in this *Ode*, where from the title the reader might expect finiſhed portraits of them all, the narrowneſs of the original ſcheme interferes, and his expectations are diſappointed. This author, who was paſſionately fond of *muſic*, and who knew its power over many of the *paſſions*, planned out an *Ode* which ſhould exhibit them to the ear rather than to the eye. Hence many of them which ſeem to have little connection with *muſic*, ſuch as *Envy*, *Avarice*, *Pride*, *Vanity*, *Aſtoniſhment*, *Ambition*, are abſent from the concert—to which however they might have been brought with no more violent ſolicitation than ſome which appear there. But deſcriptions of the *paſſions* by their *muſical* powers ſolely muſt be imperfect. The appropriate inſtruments are but few—*Chearfulneſs* is obliged therefore to take *the horn* from *Melancholy*. The ſtile too of performance would admit but little variety—*the mingled air of Deſpair* is therefore the *veering ſong of Jealouſy*. *Collins* ſoon found out the defect of his ſcheme, and accordingly calls in other aids—he gives us a *pictureſque* ſcene, in which *Hope* exerts herſelf—*Revenge and Pity* he introduces *dramatically*, and to *Chearfulneſs* he aſſigns a peculiar *character*, and ſupplies her with proper aſſociates. In theſe expedients he is ſucceſsful, but they ſhew the inſufficiency of the original deſign.

It may be doubted whether any ſcheme which ſhould merely exhibit the *paſſions* in ſucceſſion, even by the aggregate of all their attributes, would without ſome baſis of continued ſtory anſwer the poet's purpoſe. It would after all be but as an unintereſting pageant to the eye, or a medley of detached tunes to the ear. Something would be wanting to give it unity—ſomething to ſoften the abruptneſs of the tranſitions. Dumb action fills up theſe intervals in recitation, and hence perhaps we may account for the difference between this *Ode* on the ſtage, and in the cloſet. The advantage of a connecting ſtory evidently appears from this, that the moſt intereſting parts of the *Ode* are thoſe in which ſuch connection is attempted by the author,—in his *Hope*, *Revenge* and *Pity*. "What paſſions cannot muſic raiſe and quell," —was an exclamation of *Dryden*—but when he was to make diſplay of its efficacy, he ſought out an appoſite ſtory which ſhould exhibit at once the powers of muſic and the effects of varying paſſion. *Dryden*'s Ode accordingly

is

is a ſublime and affecting *Drama*—*Collins*'s a muſical *Paſtichio* or an exhibition of images in *Chineſe Shades*.

The order of the paſſions, *Fear*, *Anger*, *Deſpair*, *Hope*, *Revenge*, *Pity*, *Jealouſy*, *Melancholy*, *Chearfulneſs*, *Joy*, ſeems to have had nothing particular to direct it. Some of them are well contraſted, as *Deſpair* and *Hope*, *Revenge* and *Pity*. But *Chearfulneſs* and *Joy* come too cloſe to each other, and *Fear* is an aukward perſonage to be put moſt forward. He might more naturally have followed *Anger* and preceded *Deſpair*. *Love* ſurely ſhould have had a more diſtinguiſhed place than as an attendant in the train of *Joy*. *Mirth*, who is introduced with him *framing a gay fantaſtic round*, is almoſt the ſame as *Joy* itſelf, whoſe *flying fingers kiſſed the ſtrings*. But for the effect of muſic in *quelling* the boiſterous and vicious *paſſions*, a theme which might have diſplayed true poetical pathos, while at the ſame time it would have afforded an uſeful leſſon of moral inſtruction, for this we look in vain in *Collins*'s Ode. Except the effort of *Pity* to *ſubdue the ſoul of Revenge*, which is an ineffectual one, no attempt is made to exhibit *muſic* as the *aid of wiſdom*.

The deſcriptions of the ſeveral *Paſſions* have uncommon merit. *Fear recoiling at the ſounds himſelf had made*, and *Hope's hailing the ſcenes at diſtance, and calling on the reſponſive voice of Echo, from every part of the diverſified landſcape, to prolong the ſtrain*, the impatient interruption of *Revenge denouncing war*, the character of the *Huntreſs* allotted to *Chearfulneſs*, *nymph of healthieſt hue*, with the animated companions excited by her *inſpiring air*,

> " *Satyrs* and *ſylvan boys* were ſeen,
> " Peeping from forth their alleys green;
> " Brown *Exerciſe* rejoic'd to hear
> " And *Sport* leap'd up, and ſeiz'd his beachen ſpear."—

All this is imagined and expreſſed in a ſpirit of genuine poetry. *Revenge* is perhaps too furious—there is too much of *Anger*, and no gloomy meditation of *Malevolence* in his compoſition. Who does not regret too, that the ſcheme of the Ode forced him into the inconſiſtency of *throwing down his blood-ſtained ſword in thunder*, to take up a muſical inſtrument? The picture of *Melancholy* cannot be exceeded. After *Milton's Il Penſeroſo*, an ordinary poet dared not attempt it, and even a great one might have failed in the attempt. *Collins*'s ſo admirably adapted ſcenery, *the ſequeſtered ſeat, the glades and glooms, the haunted ſtream, over which the mingled meaſure ſtole with fond delay;* his accompanyments to her penſiveneſs—the *bubbling runnels joining the ſound*, with the *calm* which ſuffered the whole to *die away in hollow murmurs*, make this in my opinion the moſt delightful paſſage of his Ode.

Doctor Johnſon's general cenſure of *Collins* as a poet, that " while he was " intent on deſcription, he perhaps did not ſufficiently cultivate ſentiment," applies certainly to his *Ode on the Paſſions* in particular. But we have not here the " harſh diction, unſkillfully laboured, and injudiciouſly ſelected— " the affectation of the obſolete or the unnatural tranſpoſitions," of which that critic has complained. In the expreſſion there is little to be cenſured and much to be commended. *Back recoiling* is indeed tautology—*daſhing ſoft* is almoſt a contradiction—and mirth *repaying the charming air* is obſcure. But the *withering look of Revenge—Anger ſweeping the ſtrings with hurried hand—mimic ſoul —laggard age—Cecilia's mingled world of ſound*, are epithets and phraſes of moſt rare felicity.

The

The verſification *Collins* has adapted to his different ſubjects with great judgment. His commentators tell us, that "though the meaſure is the ſame in "which the muſical efforts of *Fear*, *Anger* and *Deſpair* are deſcribed, yet by "the variation of cadence, the character and operations of each, and parti-"cularly of the laſt, are ſtrongly expreſſed, and the poet's power of imitative harmony ſkilfully diſplayed." This is in part true, though the mean expreſſion *by fits* in the laſt line of *deſpair* anticipates and defeats the effect of *by ſtarts* which varies the cadence. But would not a *diverſity of ſtanza* have anſwered better for theſe different paſſions? The reader, by three ſimilar ſtanzas, has probably been led into an opinion that the Ode is to proceed with regularity, and *Hope* is a being of too mild a nature to oppoſe the current. The ſecond line therefore of *Hope*, always breaks in upon him offenſively. The lines in deſcribing *Melancholy*,

"Round an holy calm diffuſing,
"Love of peace and lonely muſing,

are unfortunately in chearful meaſure. But the other lines of the ſame ſtanza are laboured with great effect. Some of the meaſures in *Chearfulneſs* and *Joy*, are happily choſen, and the break in the line, where *Hope* is forced to conclude, is admirably expreſſive of ſudden and violent interruption.

And longer had ſhe ſung — but, with a frown,
Revenge impatient roſe.

The *Epilogue* to the Ode is ſomewhat too tame, and the concluſion unneceſſarily protracted. It is with propriety in the ſame meaſure as the *Prologue*.—but the line *diſturb'd*, *delighted*, *rais'd*, *refin'd* in the one, is of a conſtruction too affectedly marked to admit the line *warm*, *energic*, *chaſte*, *ſublime* in the other. I am afraid the Theory in the concluſion is not juſtified—the diverſity in the effects of ancient and modern muſic muſt be aſcribed to the diverſity of manners in thoſe to whom they were applied. Ancient muſic would be quite too ſimple for our refinement. It is perhaps fanciful to aſſume that at any time it commanded at Athens—it is ridiculous to imagine that its introduction with us could put back our experience, or repreſs our luxuries.

On the whole the Ode of *Collins* has *blemiſhes* and *beauties* — the former principally in the *ſcheme*, the latter in the *execution*. Many parts of it deſerve commendation, but the critic who calls it "the fineſt ode in the language" challenges an enquiry into its faults which it is ill fitted to ſuſtain.

F.

D U B L I N:
Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.
[Price, Two Pence.]

The Editor will thankfully receive from the Friends of Literature, any communications they may favour him with on the ſubjects appropriated to the nature of this publication.

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[A Letter Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER XLVIII.

SATURDAY, JULY 30, 1796.

Et ſapere et fari.
Wiſdom with ſpeech.

" Dr. Mr. FLAPPER,

" I WAS bred in a retired ſituation under the direction of a fond mother, " whoſe precepts taught me to deſpiſe the meanneſs of diſſimulation, and " revere the beauty of truth, inſomuch that I was habitually trained in the " ſtrict obſervance of ſincerity, and convinced it was my duty to tell my " mind plainly on every occaſion.

" My firſt excurſion from home was at the invitation of a female relation, " paſt the meridian ſeaſon of life, and who, being a ſingle woman, is the " uncontrouled miſtreſs of a conſiderable fortune. My partial friends all " congratulated me on receiving this mark of her notice, looking upon it " as an indication of future ſolid favours. I accordingly four days ſince " arrived at the country ſeat of *Miſs Penelope Porcupine*, from whence I " write this letter. Immediately after I had paid my compliments of en- " quiry for her health, ſhe demanded if I did not think her much altered " ſince I laſt ſaw her.—I readily anſwered in the affirmative, ſaying I was " ſorry to ſee it.—' You do not think then that my looks are changed for ' the better.'—' No indeed, Madam, quite the reverſe.'—' I appear older ' perhaps.'—' Twenty years at leaſt, Madam.'—' Hum! what age do you ' take me to be?'—' Near fifty, Madam.'—Here *Miſs Porcupine* laughed " very loud, though ſhe ſeemed I thought not well pleaſed, for immediately " ſhe changed the diſcourſe. From this 'till dinner time ſhe retired to her " cloſet to write letters, and during the whole of that repaſt ſcolded her " attendants a great deal, and converſed very little with me: I ſuppoſe ſhe " thought it polite to apologize for this, as ſhe aſked me, if ' it was not a ' pity that ſome ſubſtitute could not be found for thoſe domeſtic plagues, ' aukward ſervants.'—To which I replied, ' that patience and ſweetneſs of ' temper could mitigate every inconvenience of life.' I'll never forget how " ſhe looked on hearing this—nor the accent in which ſhe ſaid, ſhe hated ' *Philoſophy in petticoats.*'

" But theſe, Sir, are only trifling inſtances of the various diſgraces I have " got into.—My reminding *Miſs Porcupine* yeſterday before company, of her

" having been brides-maid to my mother is reckoned as bad as if I had " ſpoken high treaſon—and ſo far from conciliating her good will, as I ear- " neſtly wiſh to do, by treating her with honeſt ſincerity, I fear I have in- " curred her antipathy. Adviſe me, Dear Sir, I beſeech you, in this exigence " —Muſt I depart from my principles, or relinquiſh the golden dreams I was " led to cheriſh? If there is any alternative—any mode of conduct by which " I can pleaſe others without deſpiſing myſelf, impart it, I entreat,

" To your diſtreſſed humble ſervant,
" PRISCILLA BLUNT."

Inſtead of ſitting formally down to deliver the advice my fair correſpondent deſires, I beg leave to recommend the following Allegory to her attentive peruſal, and I have no doubt but her obſervance of the precepts it tends to inculcate will reinſtate her in the good graces of her couſin, and alſo ſecure to her the approbation of all her acquaintance.

' IN former ages, on the ſublime heights of Olympus, were nurtured ' two nymphs, both of exquiſite beauty, though entirely differing in ap- ' pearance from each other.—The one was the pupil of *Minerva*, the *Goddeſs* ' *of Wiſdom*, who had given her the name of RESERVE—the other the ' *èleve* of *Aletheia*, the *Goddeſs of Truth*, who diſtinguiſhed her by the appel- ' lation of INGENUITY.

' It happened that *Diſcord* (who is wont to buſy herſelf every where) led ' *Minerva* and *Aletheia* into a converſation on the comparative perfections ' of their favourite nymphs. The diſpute was carried on with more acri- ' mony than temperance—each goddeſs was ſtrenuous in aſſerting the utility ' reſulting from her own ſyſtem of inſtruction; and as neither would give ' up her opinion, the controverſy threatened to be endleſs. *Diſcord* waved ' her duſky pinions and exulted in ſeeing the miſchief which ſhe had made; ' but the goddeſſes, finding it impoſſible to adjuſt the ſcale of the merits of ' their reſpective favourites, at laſt fell upon the expedient of ſubmitting ' RESERVE and INGENUITY to the inſpection of the human race, and ' agreed to abide by the deciſion of ſublunary judgment on their claims. ' They well knew that the world is ſlow and cautious of laviſhing its appro- ' bation: and ſo far from giving way to unjuſtly-favourable predilection, ' that it is ſometimes reluctant in aſſigning the palm to real deſert—but ' each was ſo certain that the deciſion muſt be conſonant to her wiſhes, that ' without further heſitation they determined on making the experiment.

' RESERVE and INGENUITY, thus caſt beneath the ſkies, with amaze- ' ment ſurveyed the new proſpects unfolded to their view: but, inſtead of ' aſſiſting each other in exploring the untried region, they inſtinctively ſhrunk ' aſunder, and purſued ſeparate paths. RESERVE ſtruck into the ſhady ' covert of a grove, which winded in mazes as far as the eye could trace it. ' She walked deliberately on, impreſſing the trees as ſhe paſt with marks ' that might aſſiſt in extricating her from the labyrinth in caſe ſhe ſhould ' loſe her way, being predetermined neither to hold parley or aſk advice.

' Meanwhile

'Meanwhile INGENUITY bounded over the upland lawn with light and 'heedleſs foot, inſomuch that her ſteps could not be traced on the dew-'beſprent graſs. She carol'd blithly as ſhe hurried on, and eagerly threw 'her glances round, in ſearch of ſome traveller to whom ſhe might impart 'the pleaſure ſhe felt.

'Through thoſe walks, though widely divided, our new adventurers were 'inſenſibly guided to the buſy haunts of life. INGENUITY firſt reached 'the deſtined ſpot—her forehead was open as day—her eyes ſparkled with 'vivacity—her boſom was bared to the Zephyr, and her golden treſſes waved 'over her ſhoulders unconfined—her form was ſhaded by a pellucid mantle 'which fluttered careleſsly on the breeze—her voice awoke the ſlumbering 'echoes, but though her ſtrain vyed for ſweetneſs with that of the feathered 'ſongſtreſs of the night, it loſt much of its effect by too frequent and unſo-'licited repetition.

'Struck with the heavenly viſion, the crowd eagerly advanced—they 'gazed—admired—examined—and diſapproved. The wary claſs of mortals 'ſhunned her—the grave condemned her freedom of ſpeech—the falſely 'polite were ſhocked at her bluntneſs—and the cenſorious ſlandered her un-'affected demeanour. Crafty deſigners took baſe advantage of her open-'neſs—the unguarded ſallies of an innocent imagination were ſometimes 'miſapprehended, and ſometimes miſrepreſented—her beſt purpoſes were 'turned againſt her, and even thoſe who pitied her inadvertencies diſliked 'her ſociety. Thus with an earneſt wiſh of pleaſing every body, and doing 'good to all, ſhe pleaſed nobody, and was reckoned a troubleſome, ill-bred, 'and dangerous companion.

'The general attention was however now withdrawn from her—for at 'length, with ſlow pace, RESERVE advanced. On beholding the vaſt 'concourſe aſſembled, ſhe endeavoured to ſhrink away from obſervation. 'Her effort was vain—ſhe had the recommendation of novelty, and the 'univerſal gaze was turned upon her progreſs—thus compelled to ſubmit 'to a ſcrutiny, ſhe caſt down her long dark eye-laſhes, and wrapping herſelf 'up in her thick veil, came reluctantly forward—making her obeiſance to the 'ſpectators with ſuch a timid and intereſting air, that a burſt of applauſe 'was diſtinctly heard. Every tongue was voluble in her praiſe—the forward 'and aſſuming were pleaſed with an appearance of diffidence which tacitly 'ſubſcribed to their own ſuperiority; and the numerous tribe, who ſkim on 'the ſurface of knowledge without ever trying its depths miſtook ſilence 'for intelligence, and gravity for wiſdom. Every body ſeemed diſpoſed to 'commend—but thoſe favourable indications quickly vaniſhed—RESERVE 'was ſoon taxed with faſtidiouſneſs—her cloſe veil was held to be aſſumed 'for the purpoſe of concealing perſonal defects—ſhe was ſuſpected of har-'bouring deſigns that never occurred to her; and every heart was cloſed to 'one, which had evidently ſhut itſelf againſt the kindly intercourſes of ſocial 'pleaſure, and confidential communication.

'For a long while the contending *Goddeſſes* abandoned their diſtreſſed pupils 'to this perplexed and diſagreeable ſituation, hoping that time would obviate

'unjuſt

'unjuſt prejudices, and that the merits of the candidates might obtain a fair 'examination—but time too often ſtrengthens prejudice, adding obſtinacy 'to error; and the diſappointed deities had the mortification of finding that 'neither of their boaſted ſyſtems of education were adequate to the forming 'a character, which ſhould attach and retain general approbation. Driven 'to this confeſſion, their mutual ire ſubſided—they renewed their conſultation 'upon amicable terms, and came to a reſolution of altering their plan. 'They now recalled the nymphs from earth, and exchanged pupils—*Minerva* 'took INGENUITY under her governance, and taught her to temper her 'openneſs with a laudable diſcretion—while *Aletheia* convinced RESERVE 'that rigid ſincerity, and chaſtened freedom, at the ſame time that they 'evince liberality of ſentiment, are not inconſiſtent with propriety of man-'ners.

'Thus inſtructed, the nymphs were again ſent to viſit the earth, to try the 'effect of this new mode of tuition; and leſt old prepoſſeſſions ſhould be 'revived to impede their ſucceſs, INGENUITY took the name of *Candour*, 'and RESERVE that of *Prudence*. Their dreſſes too were new modelled—'the mantle of INGENUITY was more cloſe in its texture, and the veil of 'RESERVE of a finer fabrick, than that which ſhe had formerly worn. 'Inſtead of entertaining mutual diſtruſt, and unkindly avoiding each other, 'they now walked hand in hand—INGENUITY addreſſed the auditors in 'a ſofter cadence, and with fewer words than ſhe had been wont to do: 'and RESERVE, no longer looking aſkance, or declining converſation, 'greeted thoſe who noticed her with complacent ſmiles, indicative of ſentiments 'very different from the narrow ones which her former behaviour evinced. 'Thus reformed and improved, their reception was univerſally favourable—'wherever they appeared they gladdened the ſcene: in the rural retreats where 'felicity loves to dwell, each ſhepherd tuned his reed to hail their approach, 'and every blooming daughter of the vale twined flowery wreathes to crown 'them; and in the city, amid the glare of ſplendour, and the buſtle of 'crowds, they were graced with applauſe whenever beheld. They were 'conſpicuous even when moſt ſtudious of ſhunning praiſe—every envious 'clamour was ſilenced, and the ſhouts of approbation reached the ſkies—'*Minerva* and *Aletheia* looked down from the celeſtial eminence, and with 'ſmiles of exultation ſaw that lofty palm which neither INGENUITY could 'win, nor RESERVE obtain, freely beſtowed upon CANDOUR, united 'with PRUDENCE.

G.

DUBLIN:

Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.

[Price, Two Pence.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER XLIX.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 6, 1796.

Juſtum et tenacem propoſiti virum
Non civium ardor prava jubentium.

HORACE.

The man of firm and virtuous mind
Depraved opinion cannot bind.

ALTHOUGH the practice of Duelling has already been the ſubject of two papers, it is a matter of ſo much importance, that I am willing to believe my readers will not be diſpleaſed to find it treated in a third; more eſpecially as this practice ſtill ſeems to be at leaſt as prevalent among my countrymen as elſewhere.

In my obſervations on the letter which I received from *Mr. O'Feather-ſpring* I mentioned my being inclined to hope that the principle was *wearing out* of ſociety; and this opinion ſeems to receive ſome confirmation from the hiſtory of duelling, of which I traced a ſketch in the firſt paper on this ſubject. It was there ſhewn that duelling began in the licentious ferocity of victorious barbarians, unreſtrained by the regulations of civil government. When in that progreſſive improvement, which the philoſopher can generally diſcover in the hiſtory of man, and which he will therefore wiſely conclude his own limited view of the complicated ſyſtem can alone prevent him from diſcovering univerſally, the violence of lawleſs anarchy began to ſubſide, and give place to the operation of public inſtitutions; theſe were neceſſarily accommodated in ſome degree to the prevailing manners of the age, and national juriſprudence adopted and licenſed, but at the ſame time regulated, in the *judicial combat*, the vindictive outrages of individuals. At length the public wiſdom of communities diſcovered the ſavage barbarity of thoſe unauthorized appeals to Heaven, and diſowned them. The indulgence of private reſentment ſeems therefore to be loſing that place in ſociety, which caſual circumſtances had procured it. Driven from the protection of the laws, though I have been informed by ſome of my legal friends that the queſtion is ſtill at iſſue whether it is, or is not an exiſting part of the law of theſe kingdoms, it is now only ſheltered by the remaining barbariſm of individuals; and it ſeems not to be an expectation too ſanguine, that in the progreſs of human improvement it may ſoon be wholly extirpated, and become a curious ſubject of ſpeculation to ſome future antiquarian.

Another conſideration, though apparently trivial, affords ſome additional encouragement. It is a remark of the hiſtorian *Thucydides*, that of all the nations of *Greece* the *Athenians* were ſooneſt civilized, and it is alleged by him as a proof of his obſervation, that they firſt ceaſed to wear arms as a part of their ordinary dreſs. A ſimilar change has within a few years taken place among ourſelves. I can recollect a time when no gentleman, and the cuſtom neceſſarily included the far more numerous claſs of thoſe who were ambitious of being conſidered as gentlemen, could appear in any company unarmed. Nor was this preparation for combat confined to the hours of ſocial feſtivity—it pervaded all the intercourſe, and mixed even with the buſineſs of life. It was not only in the evening that the *ſmall ſword* was worn as a part of the full-dreſs of a man of faſhion, but the merchant's clerk of any gentility could ſcarcely carry a bill for acceptance without a *couteau* hanging by his ſide. I have often reflected with pleaſure on this change of national manners, and cannot avoid conſidering it as promiſing the farther improvement, of aboliſhing for ever that remnant of gothic barbariſm which is the ſubject of this paper.

It has often been urged in defence of this practice, that it affords the only effectual reſtraint for the behaviour of individuals; and, ſhould it be diſcontinued, the refined correctneſs of modern manners muſt want enforcement. Politeneſs, ſtrictly and properly ſo called, that which is not confined to the ſurface of our conduct, but flows from the heart, it will probably be admitted, cannot have any natural connection with a ſyſtem of violence; but ſtill it is maintained, that what paſſes current in the world as politeneſs, though not ſterling, is yet a convenient medium of circulation in our ordinary intercourſe; and that duelling is the *Birmingham* by which this falſe but uſeful *ſpecie* is ſupplied. I do not indeed by any means deny the convenience of enforcing by ſelfiſh motives an attention to propriety of conduct in thoſe, whoſe ſenſe of real politeneſs is not ſufficiently ſtrong to afford it a better origin. I only maintain that duelling is not indiſpenſably neceſſary for this purpoſe. What is it that induces ninety-nine perſons in one hundred to fight duels? A regard to the opinion of the world, and an apprehenſion that a man muſt, if he ſhould not fight, forfeit his reception in ſociety. If then this regard to public opinion be ſo powerful as to induce a man to fight, it is itſelf ſufficiently powerful to enforce every thing which the apprehenſion of fighting can enforce. Let a man be but once thoroughly perſuaded that by violating the laws of politeneſs he ſhould exclude himſelf from ſociety, and thoſe laws will be at leaſt as completely enforced as by the ſyſtem of duelling. For this purpoſe all that is neceſſary is to produce ſome little reformation in the public opinion—to perſuade the world, (and they are beginning to entertain the perſuaſion) that a man's eſtimation in ſocial intercourſe ſhould be determined, not by his diſpoſition to fight, but by his wiſh to pleaſe. The diſlike manifeſted for the man who has been remarked for frequent duelling is a proof that the public are beginning to be wiſe enough to perceive, that to baniſh rudeneſs by violence is to remedy a leſſer evil by a greater.

I would

I would here conclude my obſervations, had not a man, reverenced as the great moraliſt of modern times, indulged himſelf in a paradoxical diſplay of ſuperior talents, by arguing in defence of duelling. *Doctor Johnſon* has not himſelf indeed publiſhed to the world this pernicious exerciſe of ingenuity. As a writer he aimed at public improvement with the ſincerity of an honeſt mind. As a companion, his object was admiration, and his Biographer thought he was ſtill the *Rambler*.

The arguments urged by *Doctor Johnſon* are I think only theſe two: that "as "ſociety is now-conſtituted duelling, is juſtifiable on the principle of ſelf-de- "fence, ſince a man muſt otherwiſe forfeit his rank in ſociety"; and that "private war is equally juſtifiable with public". Such are the arguments for which the authority of *Johnſon* is triumphantly quoted—arguments ſufficiently plauſible indeed to amuſe in converſation, but which can never abide the teſt of ſerious diſcuſſion.

With regard to the former, it may be ſufficient to urge that the ſame principle would equally juſtify any action which might happen to be authorized by public opinion. If to maintain a man's favourable reception in ſociety be conſidered as juſtifiable ſelf-defence, he is warranted, we muſt ſay, in a compliance with every cuſtom, however vicious, which has been ſo far eſtabliſhed in the ſociety of which he is a member, that a refuſal muſt be followed by excluſion. On this principle a *Mahometan* is juſtified in adhering to the *Koran*, ſince he knows that, though thoſe who have always been Chriſtians are tolerated, he muſt by his converſion to Chriſtianity forfeit his reception in ſociety. This principle was condemned by the *primitive Chriſtians*, who ſacrificed all the comforts of ſocial life to the obligations of religious duty. And yet this condemned principle is to be conſidered as ſufficiently ſtrong among *modern Chriſtians* to juſtify a practice wholly inconſiſtent with religion.

The other argument has ſtill leſs force. To ſay that private war is equally juſtifiable with public, is to rebel againſt all the inſtitutions of civil ſociety, and to bring back mankind to the licentiouſneſs of ſavage anarchy. Public war is juſtifiable, becauſe two independant ſtates are not reſtrained by any common judicature. Deliberate hoſtility between two individuals is not warranted by any ſuch neceſſity. An appeal to the deciſions of law is open to them in all caſes of real injury, and a compliance with the capricious punctilios of faſhion has already been ſhown to be an inſufficient juſtification.

It may perhaps gratify my readers to annex to theſe remarks an inſtance of a man who had ſufficient firmneſs to reſiſt this law of opinion, and who yet appears not to have ſuffered by his refuſal, ſince he has himſelf publiſhed the tranſaction to the world. *Jonas Hanway*, in the narrative of his travels to the Caſpian ſea, relates the following anecdote.: "A certain manuſcript "of no conſequence, clandeſtinely taken and miſrepreſented, gave an alarm "to a gentleman of the fighting ſort; upon which I received a letter from "him conceived in theſe terms:

"SIR,

" SIR,

" I understand you are the author of a paper subscribed * * * *, in which " are initial letters, that I presume mean me. AS I ALWAYS MAKE IT A " POINT TO RESENT AFFRONTS, I desire you will meet me at * * * *, and " bring your sword with you.

" I am, &c."

' To which I answered to this effect:

" SIR,

" In reply to your letter, the meaning of which I suppose is a challenge " to fight with you: as I do not understand by what authority you call me " to account, I will NOT tell you whether I am the author of any such " Paper as you mention or not: but this I think my honor is concerned " to inform you, that I never intend to do any man an injury; and if an " offence does come, that honor also obliges me to make atonement, without " putting my friends to the trouble of fighting: and for my part I ALWAYS " MAKE IT A POINT NOT TO RESENT AFFRONTS, beyond the measure which " reason and religion warrant.

" As to meeting you at * * * *, I have no inclination to walk in such " weather as this, nor am I in the least disposed to fight for NOTHING; but a " sword I ALWAYS wear, intending to use it upon every just occasion.

" I am, &c."

' My antagonist was satisfied, and no doubt was glad to be excused fighting, ' as all men are, except those who are intoxicated with wine, or, what is much ' the same, with anger, or quite deprived of understanding.'

If my readers are desirous of knowing what was the secret which enabled *Hanway* thus to act with impunity, in opposition to prevailing opinion, it seems to have been only the maintaining one uniform character of virtuous simplicity. A man, who is in some parts of his conduct frivolous or corrupt, cannot easily procure credit for acting from a virtuous motive when his behaviour may be traced to a principle more congenial to his other actions: but the world is sufficiently just to reverence consistent integrity.

E.

DUBLIN:
Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.
[Price, Two Pence.]

The Editor will thankfully receive from the Friends of Literature, any communications they may favour him with on the subjects appropriated to the nature of this publication.

Persons desirous of having this paper sent to the country, are requested to apply to the Clerks of the Roads at the General Post Office.

[A Letter Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER L.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 13, 1796.

Juvenum prodis
Publica cura.

HORACE.

IT affords great ſatisfaction to the Flapper to find that he is conſidered by the young of both ſexes as a peculiar friend, and reſorted to by them for confidential aſſiſtance. He hopes the public will receive favourably the two following letters, ſelected from thoſe of his numerous correſpondents of this claſs.

TO THE FLAPPER.

" MR. FLAPPER,

" DO not form an unfavourable opinion of my modeſty, when I entreat " of you to aſſiſt an individual by acting diametrically oppoſite to the general " intention of your work. In a caſe almoſt of life and death—let your " paper for once become the means of preventing information. Learning, " like experience, may ſometimes be bought too dear; and the ſtudy of " proper times and places is as neceſſary to the perſon who would impart it, " as it is for a huſbandman to know the ſeaſon for his ſowing, or to watch " the weather for his harveſt.

" My great grievance, Mr. Flapper, is a friend who has read every thing, " and who is ſo fond of my improvement that he beſtows on me at ſecond " hand all the ſtores of his memory, and the whole diſplay of his genius and " obſervation. Every anecdote in every hiſtorian and biographer he remem- " bers with the greateſt accuracy—the only thing which he does not remem- " ber is that he has told them to me before. Of claſſical knowledge, with " all the arguments and ſurmiſes of commentators, antient or modern, good " or bad, on every paſſage, he is a perfect maſter—the ſciences he knows " in the moſt minute detail. In ſhort he knows every thing except what has " unfortunately been forced on my conviction, that *Terence*'s maxim, *Ne quid* " *nimis*, applies ſtrongly to communicating information, and that the wiſe " man who tells us, *there is a time for all things*, would not have us make long " ſpeeches in a ſhower of rain, or ſtudy natural philoſophy in the ſtreets.

" Until I became acquainted with this kind-intentioned companion—or, " as I find him, well-diſpoſed enemy, I really thought a good memory and " great learning moſt valuable qualities; but how can I now like what I am " tortured with every hour—to the oppreſſion of all my powers and the pre- " judice of my health? I know no perſon whoſe conſtitution could bear, or " whoſe temper could endure what I have patiently ſubmitted to. My friend " has lungs to out-talk *Stentor*—he can ſuſtain cold like a Ruſſian bear and " heat like a Salamander—I believe he never feels the cravings of natural " appetite, and I am ſure he has no noſe. I was almoſt poiſoned about a " month ago, by his ſtopping in the wind of a ſlaughter-houſe to give me his " epitome—and not a very ſhort one it was—of the hiſtory of the Roman " Emperors. From *Nero* and *Domitian* I might have expected perſecution, " but even *Trajan* and *Titus* were equally unfavourable to me. There is not " a ſingle important event in Hiſtory at which I do not ſhudder—and once " the *Bible* had well nigh proved my ruin, while I was forced to liſten for

" two hours to a comment on the book of *Revelations* in a glaſs-houſe, to " which I had been brought to have the proceſs of the manufacture explained " to me.

" The week before laſt, Mr. Flapper, is one which I never ſhall forget. " It was only by the greateſt care I am yet recovered ſo far as to be able to " write this letter, nor would I hazard this exertion but in the hope of being " through your means ſaved from ſuch dangers in future. Hear my unfor- " tunate diary, and judge whether I am not every moment in peril of my " life.

" *Monday.* —— Almoſt run over by a jaunting-car—while we were ſurveying " a field—in Skinner Row.

" *Tueſday.* —— My coat caught fire—as I nodded by the fire-ſide, during a " diſſertation on the whale-fiſhery.

" *Wedneſday.*——Kept out until two in the morning—by a lecture on the " Solar Microſcope.

" *Thurſday.* —— My pockets picked—by the principles of politeneſs, extracted " from *Lord Cheſterfield*'s letters.

" *Friday.* —— Dinner delayed until eight o'clock—by the art of cookery of the antients.

" *Saturday.* —— Violent head-ach—cold—and fever—by an imitation of the " *Demoſthenes*, as we kept ſlow pace with a car laden with " iron bars from one end of Dublin to the other—heavy " rain the whole time.

" The day following I took to my bed, and would certainly, through my " friend, have loſt the benefit of the only good thing my phyſician preſcribed, " reſt, had I not moſt fortunately contracted a deafneſs among my Saturday's " diſaſters. But as I have now recovered my hearing, I can only look for- " ward to a repetition of my miſeries, unleſs you, Mr. Flapper, interpoſe for " my relief.

" I ſhould not trouble you, Sir, from any mercenary views, though I have " no fortune but what I am to derive from my friend, had not his benevo- " lence excited my gratitude moſt powerfully, by ſettling, beyond the in- " fluence of caprice, every thing upon me. Any reluctance on my part to " liſten to what, I know, he tells as much for my improvement, as his own " gratification, would be an act of unthankfulneſs which my nature ſcorns. " But advice from you I know he would attend to.—Do then, Mr. Flapper, " give him ſome idea that memory may be weakened by loading it too much, " and that young people are improved more by reading books themſelves " than hearing their contents from others.—And Oh! if poſſible make him " comprehend the ſenſations of heat and cold, and inform him of their " effects on the generality of mankind. By ſo doing you will ſhew a kindneſs " to a perſon in great diſtreſs, and perhaps be the means of preſerving the life " of one, who hopes ſoon to ſubſcribe himſelf,

" Your much obliged,

" JEREMIAH GASP."

TO THE FLAPPER.

" DEAR MR. FLAPPER,

' IF you have tears prepare to ſhed them now.'—For I will venture to ſay, " that in all the variety of miſery—which you may have peruſed from correſ- " pondents—you have not met with a caſe of ſuch forlorn hope as mine. " But I truſt you are good natured—I know you will commiſerate my ſuffer- " ings—for I am cruelly—very cruelly treated. Oh! Mr. Flapper!—but you " ſhall hear preſently. Juſt think then, Sir, with patience, if you can—for " I am ſure I cannot—of a girl at my time of life—almoſt ſeventeen—being " immured within the frightful walls of a gloomy old manſion houſe—fifty

" miles

" miles from town—entruſted to the watchful protection of an antient maiden " lady—obliged to pay an implicit ſubmiſſion to her whims—condemned to " the dull routine of domeſtic duties (for I muſt learn houſe-keeping for- " ſooth) without any thing to diverſify the hideous uniformity—but the " ſtriking of the hall clock—(which by the bye is the ſloweſt I ever heard) " and the occaſional barking of dogs at moonlight—doomed—to a per- " petual gaze at the inſipid ſcenery of groves—waterfalls—meadows—and " friſking lambs—to live, where viſits muſt depend upon the weather—and " aſſemblies be regulated by the moon. Nay, Mr. Flapper—I cannot—even " were I inclined to read—get one novel—one tolerable book in the whole " houſe—unleſs you will dignify with that name *Glaſs's Art of Cookery*, " or *Harvey's Meditations on the Tombs*.

" But this, Sir, is not all—I am not only thus debarred of the dear de- " lights of ſociety—faſhionable ſociety—the only kind that is deſirable—thus " precluded from enjoying the charming perplexity which ariſes from a mul- " tiplicity of engagements—thus unfeelingly deprived of all the eſſentials to " true happineſs—all that can make life worth poſſeſſing—dreſs—plays— " operas—drums—camps—balls—ſhews—routs—ſales—maſquerades—pro- " menades—flambeaus, &c.——But I am fated to hear—nay, to hear daily " without murmuring—all that dotage—ill-nature—and envy can ſuggeſt— " to vilify delights—which their detractor affects to deſpiſe, becauſe ſhe can- " not enjoy. To hear it aſſerted, with an appearance of ſerious conviction— " that pleaſure is not the principal object of life. But I hope, Sir, as you " are a moraliſt, and of courſe regard truth—that you will riſe up in its " defence—and not permit ſuch a paradox as this to remain undenied.

" Thus have I ſtated to you the puniſhment to which I am doomed—no " doubt you will ſuppoſe the crime muſt have been a heinous one indeed— " Ah! Sir, did you but know how little I have deſerved it!—but you ſhall " hear—if I can collect my thoughts to relate it with conſiſtency. I have " ever wondered how parents can be ſo cruel—are there not pleaſures enough " for them and for their children?—I have already told you my age—allow " me to add—that I am called a very pretty girl—and if you will regard my " opinion—the title has not been conferred without merit:—but to proceed— " I have a mamma, Sir, not very young—who has a houſe in town—and " lives in the faſhionable world—(papa has been dead ſome years)—I have " been told ſhe was once handſome, and ſo ſhe thinks herſelf ſtill—but I " aſſure you—in this ſhe is glaringly ſingular in her opinion. However, " ſhe ſtill holds a rank among thoſe who affect to love talking about virtue " and vice—nature and art, &c.—though if it were not for the influence of " more powerful attractions in our houſe—than thoſe which belong to your " *cultivated minds*—I am confident it would not have been frequented by a " ſingle creature who wears a faſhionable coat.

" For the laſt few delightful months, before I was entombed—like *Juliet* in " the vault of her anceſtors—the object of our male viſitors was too une- " quivocal not to be perceived even by mamma—in ſpite of that high degree " of ſelf-eſtimation which led her to conclude—that no man—ever looked but " to admire—or addreſſed her—but to devote himſelf to her ſervice. Indeed " had I been dull enough myſelf—not to diſcover what was ſo obvious to all " —ſtill I had not been kept in ignorance by my ſtupidity—for I muſt ac- " knowledge, Mr. Flapper, that of all our male viſitants—*Mr. Flirt* pleaſed " me moſt—and he took no inconſiderable pains to let me know—unper- " ceived by mamma—that I had enraptured him: Dear Sir, what could I " do?—*Mr. Flirt* was a charming man—remarkably handſome—ſung cat- " ches—danced like an angel—I aſſure you he was the beſt partner I ever " knew—Beſides— how could I have the ſmalleſt objection to the character " of a man—whom I ſaw plainly mamma approved of?—How could I ſuppoſe " —that ſhe would reject him for my huſband—whom ſhe delighted in—as " a companion for herſelf?—Encouraged by theſe conſiderations—I confeſs— " I did not give him any reaſon to think—that I diſapproved of his ad- " dreſſes.

" Thus

" Thus matters went on for ſome time—mamma taking every opportunity " when we were together—of cautioning me againſt the various deceits of " men:—labouring to convince me that even to look at them—was not alto- " gether innocent—but that to converſe with vivacity—or ſmile with appro- " bation—were preludes to inevitable ruin and hopeleſs diſgrace. She de- " ſired me to read your papers—to learn the dominion of my paſſions— " and look on pleaſure with indifference. Such were the wholeſome precepts " truly—which ſhe vainly attempted to impreſs on my mind—by every means " but example: but to ſuch precepts—and particularly from mamma—I " determined not to pay the ſmalleſt attention—for how was it reaſonable " or natural to think—that thoſe who had often told me, with all the warmth " of truth, that their happineſs depended upon my approbation—and that " they lived but to obtain it—whoſe very countenances were enlivened or " depreſſed with mine—could poſſibly harbour a thought prejudicial to my " peace? And how could I ſuppoſe that while nature and paſſion pointed " to happineſs—they led to miſery, and that pleaſure—the ſolace of our lives " —ought to be rejected with diſdain?—But now, Sir,—to the unhappy cataſ- " trophe. One morning mamma ſurpriſed me reading in my dreſſing room " a very harmleſs, but charming billet which I had juſt received by my " faithful Lucy from Mr. *Flirt*—between my delight at having got it— " and my miſery at being diſcovered—I really was never ſo confuſed in my " life. Mamma inſtantly ſnatched the paper from my hands, and read it " with avidity and rage—but judge, Mr. Flapper, how great was my aſtoniſh- " ment, when having peruſed the billet—which even you muſt have allowed " to have been perfectly innocent—(for I aſſure you upon my honor—it " contained nothing more than a propoſal to elope—and aſſurances of eternal " love)—mamma with an unaccountable ſpite in her manner and fretfulneſs " on her countenance, ordered me to remain where I was—and not pre- " ſume to appear in her preſence—until I was prepared to acknowlege the " enormity of my crime—and determined never to ſee Mr. *Flirt* more.

" After a few days paſt in demands of compliance on the part of mamma, " and firm refuſal on my ſide—during which I was precluded from ſeeing " any one—but an ambaſſador in the perſon of my maid—ſhe formed at laſt " the barbarous reſolution of ſending me to the country:—to remain there " —'till time ſhould ſoften me to obedience. But I ſcorned to comply with " her odious terms—I remained fixed to my purpoſe—and was finally— " after a few days perſeverance in my reſolution—tranſmitted by eaſy ſtages " to the place from whence I addreſs you. Often indeed during my journey " did I expect to be reſcued from impending fate—by him who had vowed " to me eternal attachment—but nothing interpoſed in my favour—I reached " my priſon without interruption—and have lately had the mortification to " hear—tho' I cannot bring myſelf to credit it—that Mr. *Flirt* is going to " be married to mamma:—Oh! Mr. Flapper—have I not now kept my " word?—have I not told you a moſt piteous tale?—ſure you will not re- " fuſe me the only requeſt I make—that you will tell mamma ſhe has been " barbarous—very barbarous in her treatment of me—that if ſhe marries— " the whole world will laugh at her.—Tell Mr. *Flirt*—that he will perjure " himſelf, and make me for ever miſerable.—And tell all the old ladies of " your acquaintance that it is not honeſt—no—nor ſenſible to become the " rivals of their own daughters—Comply with my wiſhes in this and you will " raiſe yourſelf high in the eſtimation of the unfortunate

X. Y. MELISSA.

DUBLIN:

Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.

[Price, Two Pence.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER LI.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 20, 1796.

THE Flapper dedicates this day's publication to the *Muſes* This is not the *Auguſtan* age of poetry—but a poetical effuſion may give pleaſure, though it fall far ſhort of abſolute perfection. In this confidence he lays before the public the following communications.

TO THE FLAPPER.

SIR,

" TURNING over the papers of a deceaſed friend ſome days ſince I " found the following Ode. I owe it to his memory to print it in the ſtate " in which I found it. If you think with me that the ſentiment of the Ode " is juſt, and the ſtyle and verſification, though not modern, and perhaps " affectedly otherwiſe, are maſculine and original, it is at your ſervice. The " ſubject is well worth your attention.

" I am, Sir, &c. &c.

" PYLADES.

Famæ ſervit ineptus.

HORACE.

FAME, AN ODE.

Thou idol Fame!
Miſtaken name
Which equally to good and ill gives birth!
In cities, camps, o'er courts, o'er plains
The univerſal Monarch reigns,
Guides and miſguides th' advent'rous ſons of earth.

Thou pompous breath,
For which men loſe their own!
Embracing death
To purchaſe high renown!
How long wilt thou remain,
Of glories, the moſt fleeting, the moſt vain?

Give me ſubſtantial good,
Which, rightly underſtood,
Is virtue, wiſdom, and religious truſt:
Theſe elevate the ſoul
Above the ſtarry pole—
Let mean ambition dignify the duſt.

When Alexander's hoſtile rage
Did 'gainſt the warring world engage,
And ways of ſavage glory trod
To emulate a god,
What Hecatombs of ſlaughtered hoſts
Were ſent to haunt Cocytus' coaſts?
How many millions ceaſed to live
To make one name ſurvive!?

So with like avarice to poſſeſs the world
Crœſus by different means purſues his end;
One o'er its mangled face confuſion hurl'd,
The other's labours to its bowels tend:
In each a paſſion miſcreate
A wiſh to be but rich, or great.

The baſis of true fame
Is—to be free from blame:
All other boaſtful arts in vain are tried—
The raiment ſhould be ſpotleſs ere 'tis dyed.
Without this title to renown
The truncheon, croſier, ermined robe,
The crown, the ſceptre and the globe
Like brands, not enſigns, make us known.

Is your ambition high? uſe means as high—
Scorn Macedon's and Lydia's kings,
With Socrates or Bacon vie:
Leave meaner things,
Leave ſov'reignty and ore
To groveling ſouls denied the wings to ſoar.

Be your ſublime attempt to ſcale the ſkies,
Oſſa nor Pelion are the ſteps to riſe;
Power is too low—
Nor will the golden bough
Lead to the bleſt abodes—
Virtue and ſcience are the ways
Ourſelves to raiſe;
Theſe only can approach us to the Gods.

Micat inter omnes
Julium ſidus. HORACE.

"MR. FLAPPER,

"THE uſeful entertainment I have received from your eſſays has made "me often wiſh, from a principle of gratitude, for the ability to repay you "in kind. Perhaps the following verſes will be admitted into one of your "ſhorter publications, and adding ſomething to its ſtature, ſupply your "readers with their accuſtomed quantity of print—in which caſe I ſhall have "the pleaſure of leſſening my debt in a ſmall degree. They were long ſince "given to me by a friend, whoſe frequent diſappointments had put an end "to his once flouriſhing trade of building caſtles in the air, but were not "ſerious enough to cure him of an habit of ſtar gazing which he acquired "in that employment. A beautiful planet which caught his attention one

"fine

" fine evening in the laſt ſummer occaſioned this poetical attempt. Although " the enthuſiaſm which produced it ſoon diſappeared with the ſetting of the " ſtar, yet as I think the thoughts it contains deſerve a longer exiſtence, I " offer it to you, certain that, if advanced to the honours of your paper, " it will live to a good age.

" I am, Sir,
" Your conſtant Reader,
" PHILO."

ADDRESS TO A PLANET.

Why riſeſt thou, fair ſtar, ſo bright,
Rival of Cynthia's ſilver beams,
While round thee of the pureſt light,
An undulating Glory ſtreams ?
Say what radiant Cherub there,
Abides in thy reſplendent Sphere,
Thence on this world to ſhed compaſſion's tear—
Or doth his viſage Anger's crimſon wear ?

And from the Trump, denouncing woe,
Gives he a devaſtating blaſt,
Such as th' angelic prince ſhall blow,
When Time his utmoſt bound has paſt—
When Death bereav'd his ancient ſway,
Shall thruſt his Vaſſals into day,
And eager, ſinking to his laſt repoſe,
The Tomb for ever on himſelf ſhall cloſe.

Hark ! hark ! the dire terrific ſound
Thro' wide-extended ſpace pervades,
Earth trembles in her deeps profound,
And Fear the boldeſt heart invades—
Rejoic'd the aweful call to hear,
War, burniſhing his ruſted Spear,
Ruſhes exulting forth in mad diſdain,
To ſtain with gore th' uncultivated plain.

Again it ſounds !—the vernal gale,
Its ſalutary breath denies,
Life's vegetable nurſes fail,
And Famine's pallid Demons riſe.
Impatient Hunger raving wild,
Who feeds the Parent with the Child,
Relentleſs Want, (whoſe eyes ſo madly bend)
Snatching the morſel from his fainting friend.

And tot'ring 'mong the ghaſtly crew,
Diſeaſe brings on his languid frame,
Before him fades Health's roſy hue,
Mirth droops—and pleaſure is a dream.—
While next, to heap the cup of woe
'Till o'er the brim the ſorrows flow,
Sedition runs, the ſpring of mad deſires,
And lights on ev'ry hill her ſignal fires.

Seduced

Seduced by the uncertain glare,
As Travellers by the meteors ray,
Prudence reſigns her modeſt air,
And leaves her inoffenſive way :—
Opinions ſtrange, 'till now unknown,
Among the humble croud are thrown,
Truth is perverted, Innocence abuſed,
Juſtice reſtrained, and Right and Wrong confuſed.

But wherefore trace the ſource of woe,
From yonder night-illuming plains ?
Aſide the lyre preſumptuous throw,
Vain Bard, and ceaſe the idle ſtrain.
From thence nor grief, nor ſorrow came,
Death ſhuns yon planet's bright extreme—
No inmate he for Realms of pure delight
Climes ever ſmiling with unclouded light.

There, reſting on unfading flowers,
Souls of celeſtial mould repoſe,
Who againſt Sin's ſeductive powers,
Unyielding Virtue did oppoſe—
And now they've paſt the toilſome way,
Pure and unchanged from Life's aſſay,
While Seraph's hymn around immortal airs,
Oblivious ſounds of ſublunary cares.

Prelude divine to endleſs joy,
Fit opening to celeſtial ſcenes,
Of happineſs which ne'er can cloy,
Of Glory which eternal reigns,
When th' unembarraſs'd mind ſhall ſee
Truth's beauties, from concealment free,
Purſue her courſe thro' Science boundleſs wave,
And in the golden current ceaſeleſs lave.

Thus Fancy cheers the weary ſoul,
Diſcloſing bright etherial views,
While life's rough path (ſuch her controul)
Without a murmur man purſues.
So chearful o'er the mountains arid brow
The Pilgrim toils, when ſeen the vale below,
Where 'mid her fields and ſtreams Damaſcus lies,
In groves embower'd, an earthly Paradiſe.

Z. Z.

DUBLIN:

Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.

[Price, Two Pence.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER LII.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 27, 1796.

Quid rides? mutato nomine de te
Fabula narratur.

HORACE.

Why do you laugh? ſtrike out the name; and fill
With your's;—the tale ſhall be a true one ſtill.

ANON.

THERE is, in certain readers, a tendency very different from that on which the Roman ſatiriſt animadverts in the lines which form my motto. The readers of whom I ſpeak are troubled with an inordinate ſenſibility, or acuteneſs, which prompts them, like thoſe innovators who aboliſhed the golden age, to introduce *mine* and *thine* into the literary world; to appropriate what was in common: and fancy, every time the Flapper's wand is raiſed, they can point out the individual on whom it is to fall. "*Me! me!* "*adſum, qui feci!* the cap fits me!" cries one, with all the raſhneſs, but without the generoſity of *Niſus*. The blind ſelf-love of a ſecond (who in this reſpect is like the reader that *Horace* has apoſtrophized) will not ſuffer him to ſuppoſe that a picture of vice or folly can bear the moſt diſtant reſemblance to himſelf;—but neither will his own propenſities to ſcandal allow him to acquit the writer of ſome perſonal alluſion; and therefore he ſets his ſagacity to work, to diſcover, amongſt his neighbours, an original for this portrait.—A third is certain that his friend *Target* was intended; and points out the ſtriking circumſtance of reſemblance; thus making a mere cat's paw of the Flapper, to drag forth a reputation, that he may devour it himſelf.

To the firſt I have nothing to ſay, but that he might have continued in concealment if he would; and that it is he himſelf who has transformed that into perſonality, which, until he came forth to claim it, was mere general obſervation.

To the ſecond, I would ſuggeſt that, in imputing perſonal alluſion to the Flapper, he may do no more than betray diſpoſitions towards detraction, in himſelf; and in conceiving that no portrait of folly or of vice can have any features in common with him, he is ſo far from ſucceeding to diſaffirm the likeneſs, that he but diſplays a blindneſs and preſumption which are calculated to tempt the indignation of a ſatiriſt, (though it will be his duty to reſiſt ſuch a temptation), and lead him to heighten his deſcription with a trait that ſhall force even the confidence of vanity to wince.

Of the third I would aſk—is *Target* then your *friend?*—Alas! he thinks ſo—Traitor!—He diſcards his ſuſpicions, as doubts injurious to your character; he entruſts his foibles to your protection, and you whiſper them to

the world; he is praiſing you, whilſt you are defaming him. Go on—for the preſent you may both be believed—his commendations paſs for extorted evidence of your merit; your ſlanders as a ſacrifice of friendſhip to veracity—his very ſilence be attributed to the want of pretext for complaint; whilſt, with a bold calumny, you ſkreen the injury which you offer him from obſervation—the temporary ſallies of his indignation may not be ſeen to ſpring from tranſient glimpſes of your treachery; nor their quick ſuppreſſion, from a generous placability of temper, or juſt ſcruple to build laſting and irrevocable eſtrangement on circumſtantial proof of falſehood; but ſet down, one to the account of paſſion, and the other of inconſtancy, may the more ſerve to lay his reputation at your feet: meantime your alarmed, and guilty ſhrinkings from detection, will be extolled as noble inſtances of forbearance and moderation—the quiet reception he gives your flattering ſpeeches—be made an argument to ſhew the groſſneſs of his appetite for praiſe; when in fact it ariſes from a delicacy of mind, that exults in the exaggeration which it attributes to your affection; or if it cannot repel all doubts of your ſincerity, at leaſt ſuppreſſes the chagrin which ſuch ſurmiſes muſt excite: your leers will be deemed the partial animadverſions of a pitying friend; your rude neglects, (accompanied with fine diſcourſes) be juſtified, as forced upon you by thoſe defects which your provident detraction has aſſigned him; and thoſe chill civilities whoſe very ſcantineſs deforms them into inſult, be debited to him as ſignal inſtances of your kindneſs and indulgence. But there will one day be a reckoning.—What the world's juſtice to your victim would not do, the mere faſhion of a future day—their capricious enmity to you will atchieve. In vain do you wrap your calumnies in the ſtale diſguiſe of a compaſſionate regard:

> "For hatred oft, affecting to bewail,
> "Will feign a fault; and whiſper it to fame:
> "Will ſap the worth it trembles to aſſail;
> "And with a ſlanderous pity, taint your name"
>
> ANON.

In time you will be diſcovered: meanwhile recollect what *Horace* has ſaid of the man, *abſentem qui rodit amicum: qui non defendit alio culpante;* and at leaſt do not hope to make the Flapper ſeem an accomplice of your ſlander.

In fact, the rod of office, which I bear, may be compared to the ſpear of *Cephalus*, deſcribed to us by *Ovid;* which—hurled at random—was ſure to hit the ſavage, whom he that caſt it did not ſee, and conſequently could not aim at. If, like that famed weapon, it by chance ſhould ſeem to ſmite a fair and honeſt breaſt, which ſlander had already wounded, let the ſufferer not only believe that the ſtroke was unintended, but that a ſhaft has been maliciouſly diverted from its courſe, which was only levelled in general againſt abſurdity and vice. I am aware that one who has been long the ſport of unjuſt cenſure may contract an habitual expectation of ill-treatment; and, though unconſcious of any guilt, take to himſelf a charge, which was not intended for him; juſt as we obſerve a horſe or dog, that has been uſed harſhly, ſhrink, if you move your hand, in expectation of a blow. To ſuch I give this warning—that the Flapper holds no individual up to ſcorn; and would rather cloſe than open a wound that was undeſerved.

The

The ſubject of my preſent paper was ſuggeſted by what paſſed the other day in a company in which I was. The Flapper was talked of; and an *Appropriator* who ſat next me—proceeded immediately to enumerate the conductors of this work; which he did with great ſeeming certainty and exactneſs; nor will the reader be ſurprized to hear that I did not find myſelf included in his liſt. It was pleaſant to obſerve the eaſy confidence with which my informer aſſigned every number to its author; commenting on their reſpective ſtyles as he went along, with all the inadvertences of which he ſeemed acquainted, even to the poſition of a ſemicolon, or etcetera. Wherever names were introduced, he told me who was meant; communicating his intelligence with a volubility, a promptneſs and preciſion, that really ſtunned, and even half perſuaded me to adopt a practice not unuſual in the world, and truſt leſs to my own conviction than to the preſumptuous aſſertions of a domineering coxcomb, who ſcattered his conjectures as if they were ſo many axioms. At leaſt, if I had no previous knowledge of the Flapper, nothing could have prevented me from ſetting it down for a medley of libel and panegyric, unleſs perhaps it were the variety of opinion with which I was ſurrounded.

Thus two ladies at the upper end of the table diſputed warmly for *Mrs. Hawthorn*, which each claimed as a picture intended for herſelf; while their huſbands were at the other end trying the titles of two candidates for the character of *Fretful*. I ventured to enquire whether either of theſe claimants had lately had the misfortune of killing his friend in a duel; but was anſwered that this was an imaginary circumſtance, introduced merely in order to baffle the reader's ſagacity; and now—one of the company took advantage of a pauſe, to obſerve that "he did not know how it was; but he felt a "*ſomething* within—which ſet him infinitely above all ſuch perſonal ſatires, "as thoſe which we mentioned to have met with in the Flapper: he could "repel them without effort; he could ſmile at them; he could trample on "them." What the *ſomething* was, neither the mock dignity of this tiptoe ſentiment, nor the burleſque ſublime of manner with which it was announced, nor the meddling arrogance, and offenſively ſupercilious airs which had diſtinguiſhed this empty gentleman's previous conduct, left me any room to doubt; and I pronounced the *ſomething* to be neither more nor leſs than a moſt inordinate ſhare of vanity; which, ſpite of what its poſſeſſor ſaid, I perceived would not prevent him from being impatient under attack. Indeed *Mr. Bloatall* ſeemed to labour under a confirmed *Aſcites* of the mind; and for which, unleſs the violence of the ſymptoms ſhall abate, he is not unlikely to undergo an operation, which with no great ſtraining of expreſſion, may be called *tapping*.

The manner in which one of the fair combatants above, urged her claim to the character of *Mrs. Hawthorn*, was widely different from the bombaſtic ſtrain of *Mr. Bloatall*. She cloſed the argument by ſaying "ſhe would give "up a claim, the ſucceſs of which could do her no credit; and which ſhe "had made originally from feeling that the picture preſented foibles which "were her own, but which the view of this reſemblance might help her to "correct;" and whilſt I liſtened I was led to doubt whether theſe erroneous applications might not conduce to the utility of the Flapper.

There

There were many candidates for the character of *Tradeſall.* One was certain it was *A*, becauſe he was near ſighted: another that it was *B*, becauſe he had got lame: *C*'s claims were founded on his being a ſubſcriber to the private theatre.: *D*'s on his having been ſeen to ſalute *Lord Truffalong* in the ſtreet: *E*'s pretenſions were nothing weaker; but the diſcuſſion of their ſeveral claims was interrupted—by one of the Ladies obſerving that *A*, *B*, *C*, *D*, and *E*, could not all be meant.—" And why not madam ?" ſaid I. If *John Tradeſall* be only Jack of all Trades—I fear it is a character to which many may aſpire, and ſhew better evidence of title—than a ſprained ankle, or ſpectacles. A vain deſire of eminence in too many various purſuits, and vainer opinion of having attained it—is a foible in the human character not unuſual, nor undeſerving the correction of a moral writer;—who, towards rendering his precepts more ſtriking and effectual, may embody them in a general character; trace the foible through its probable effects, and heighten theſe with ſomething of (perhaps comic) exaggeration. If by copying perſonal defects, or reciting individual actions, he faſtens on any one perſon the picture which he has thus drawn, he tranſgreſſes his province, and is to blame; but ſhall a man be permitted to addreſs the Satiriſt, and ſay—" Sir, I have " an exceeding good opinion of myſelf. I conſider myſelf as excellent in ſo " many ways, that, in ſhort, I am a paragon of complicated perfection: I " requeſt, Sir, you will not attempt to throw ridicule on ſuch characters. I " deſire, Sir, you may not be perſonal." It would ſurely be ſtrange proceeding thus to exempt vice and folly from correction; and make them an aſylum, to which their owner may fly from the laſh of Satire ? " *Des malheur-* " *eux ! pourront ils ſe ſauver de l'infamie, a force de la meriter ?*" * —If a man be depicted by his abſurdities, or by his crimes, let him ſhuffle off the likeneſs—by diſcarding theſe. (If his face were ſmutted he would not quarrel with the glaſs, which, by reflecting its impurities, aſſiſted him to wipe it clean.) Meantime let him not blame the writer for thoſe capricious applications which (be his pen never ſo chaſte) certain meddling critics will not fail to make: let him not continually require to be informed that by *Trim*, the Author does not mean the *Duke of Ormond*; nor, like *Scrub*, imagine, wherever he hears a laugh, that he muſt of courſe be the ſubject of converſation.

Let the Satiriſt not intend to be perſonal, and he will not be ſo; but, towards avoiding the poſſibility of his ſketch reſembling ſome one, he is not to join a horſe's neck to a human head: to diſfigure his images by monſtrous incongruity. He ſhould not have any individual in his eye; but his examples muſt be ſupplied by obſervations upon men, and therefore reſemble what is found amongſt men; otherwiſe they will be unnatural and abſurd. He is to paint man in the abſtract;—but the portrait, which is like to no man living, will be but an indifferent reſemblance of human nature.

* Gibbon.

DUBLIN:
Printed by R. E. Mercier and Co. No. 31, Angleſea-ſtreet.
[Price, Two Pence.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER LIII.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 1796.

——— *Concordia diſcors.* OVID.

A diſcordant Harmony.

TO THE FLAPPER.

" SIR,

"IT is a fact, aſſerted by thoſe whoſe ſituations afford them the beſt opportunities of judging, that the female ſex, with all its natural ſoftneſs, endures not only mental, but even the extremeſt bodily ſufferings, with greater reſignation than men can boaſt. Where, indeed, the exerciſe of fortitude is called into ſudden exertion, though there are not wanting, even in this caſe, inſtances of females who could conquer every feeling, and ſubmit without a groan to the ſevereſt tortures; they are not, however, ſufficiently numerous on compariſon, to warrant the aſſertion. The more delicate frame of woman ſeems formed by the hand of its Maker with quicker perceptions than that of man. Their greater vivacity, and more animated enthuſiaſm, prove they have much more lively perceptions of pleaſure. The ſame delicacy of contexture, it is but reaſonable to ſuppoſe, muſt render them equally ſuſceptible of the acute ſenſations of pain. They may therefore be more eaſily overborne by the firſt violent impreſſions of either than men, whoſe more rigid temper may for a time reſiſt a weight of ſuffering, under which female ſoftneſs would immediately ſink. That very firmneſs of mind, with which man is endued, as being adapted to the active ſcenes of life, for which he is deſigned, is ſeldom found to accommodate itſelf to a long continued preſſure. Of a harder temper, when it at all gives way, it is too apt to be at once broken down; while the weaker, but more finely tempered ſpring of the female mind, though it may be cruſhed by a ſudden ſhock of unexpected calamity, can yet, by habitual reſiſtance, accommodate itſelf to a much greater preſſure of affliction, where its increaſe has been gradual and progreſſive.

" That they are thus wiſely framed by the hand of their Creator, for a patient endurance of pain and ſuffering, as being by nature more liable to their attack, is the general mode of accounting for the difference obſervable in this reſpect between the ſexes. But the queſtion ſtill remains, how is it that they are thus adapted by Providence to the ſufferings which they ſo frequently endure; what is there in their compoſition which thus fits them

" for the part which it is ſo commonly their lot to act? To this the only " ſatisfactory anſwer ſeems to be, that it is the happy compenſation for their " greater weakneſs and ſeverer ſufferings, that they poſſeſs advantages for the " acquiſition of religion, the moſt ſolid ground of unconquerable reſignation, " ſuperior to thoſe which are given to men; and much more generally avail " themſelves of them. By far the greater part of what little religion remains " among us will be found with them. The peculiar turn of their education " has a powerful tendency to encourage thoſe exerciſes of piety, for which the " warmth and ſoftneſs of their tempers, the gentleneſs and ſweetneſs of their " affections, the delicacy and refinement of their ſenſibilities, naturally qualify " them. The intereſting topics of religion are more preſſed upon them, while " their imaginations are lively, their affections warm and pure; nor are theſe " ſentiments counteracted while forming into habit, by that early promiſcuous " intercourſe with the world, which it is the dangerous lot of the other ſex " to encounter. Even after they have arrived at maturity, excluſively of the " ſoftneſs of their tempers and greater natural refinement, their more retired " and tranquil life, ſecluded from the turbulence and ſeduction of the world, " the whole tenor of their duties, the awakening ſituations in which they are " often placed; all conſpire to preſerve and cheriſh thoſe religious impreſſions, " which they had received with peculiar advantage in their youth.

" From this ſource I have ever traced the wonderful conſtancy and patience, " with which I have witneſſed the weakeſt women ſubmit to the moſt excru- " ciating tortures without a murmur. This unwearied reſignation, more " truly eſtimable in my mind than the triumphs of heroiſm, I have never found " connected with any other than a religious character; a circumſtance which " evinces that it was derived from religious principle, rather than the texture " of their frame or natural diſpoſitions. What aſtoniſhing effects have I not " ſeen produced by its conſolations! I have beheld the tendereſt and weakeſt " of the ſex, while every nerve was convulſed with agony, not merely ſup- " preſs all expreſſions of their ſufferings, but preſerve their own innocent " chearfulneſs, and endeavour to diffuſe it through their afflicted families. " I have ſeen a woman, bleſſed with every felicity that could attach her to the " world; youth, opulence, beauty, talents, univerſal admiration, the ado- " ration of a huſband of uncommon worth, children, the images of her own " ſoftneſs, generoſity, and ſweetneſs of temper; a woman, whoſe boſom bled " for the ſlighted diſtreſſes of others, ſhewing here only a trembling ſenſibility " that amounted nearly to weakneſs; ſuch a woman have I ſeen viſited with " tortures, at the very recollection of which my mind ſhudders with horror; " of which, while they were rending her to pieces, ſhe alone appeared inſen- " ſible. With her converſation ſhe would ſtill ſoothe, conſole, delight and " improve. If nature was at any time ſubdued by that conflict, under which, " alas, ſhe ſunk; with what fortitude did ſhe conceal her ſufferings, till by " the moſt affectionate artifices ſhe had removed what ſeemed to give her ſtill " the keeneſt pain, the ſympathy of thoſe ſhe loved! No length, no aggra- " vating acuteneſs of her pains, could ſo far ſubdue her, as to force from her " an impatient wiſh to be relieved from her ſufferings.

" Let Man then boaſt of fortitude. But reſignation, the more difficult " and praiſe-worthy virtue, ſeems more appropriate to Woman. Fortitude is " more dependant on bodily conſtitution; reſignation upon reaſon. Fortitude " is generally connected with bodily ſtrength; reſignation out of weakneſs " is made ſtrong. The neceſſity of exerciſing fortitude is ſeldom of long " duration; reſignation often is required, often is exerciſed, nearly from the " cradle to the grave.

" Man

" Man ought then to be ſhamed into a conſtancy, which would deſpiſe " every conſideration but that of duty, by emulating that ſex whoſe weakneſs " he pities, whoſe underſtanding he too often affects to decry. And let the " female ſex, whilſt they behold ſuch affecting inſtances of heroic patience " in thoſe, who are, by nature, liable to the ſame pain, and equally " feeble with themſelves, be inſtructed to apply to that ſource, from which " that ſelf-poſſeſſion can alone be derived; that if, like them, they ſhould be " appointed to encounter affliction, they may, like them, be enabled to " triumph over it.

" CLEMENS."

TO THE FLAPPER.

" SIR,

" In this age of rapid improvement I beg leave to ſubmit to your conſider- " ation a project, which is the fruit of much meditation. Should it appear " that I have indulged myſelf in viſionary ſpeculations, let the Flapper correct " me, and awake me from my dream.

" My ſcheme, you muſt allow, would be a moſt uſeful one, if it could be " properly executed. It is no leſs than to found an academy for completely " inſtructing the youth of both ſexes in the elements of faſhionable behaviour, " and in thoſe accompliſhments which are abſolutely neceſſary in this enlight- " ened age.

" It is manifeſt that the Univerſity of Dublin is not at all adapted to this " deſirable purpoſe. We know, that in the courſe of old-faſhioned learning, " which is there taught, but elſewhere happily exploded, young gentlemen " may obtain premiums and other academical honours, and take degrees " with credit to themſelves and their tutors, yet at the ſame time be totally " ignorant of *gambling*, *quizzing*, and all other faſhionable ſciences. I am " not, indeed, ſo ſanguine as to expect that my Academy will be immediately " ſubſtituted in the place of Trinity College. There are ſtill ſome ſtrange " prejudices in favour of ancient literature, that would make ſuch a meaſure " as yet impracticable: though I am not without hopes—But at preſent " I rely entirely on encouragement by ſubſcription.

" I beg leave to lay before you a ſlight outline of the courſe of ſtudy which " I propoſe ſhould be purſued in my new Academy.

" In the Univerſity of Dublin the ſtudents begin (as I have been informed) " with the ſtudy of *Logic* or the *Art of Reaſoning*. As Reaſoning is, with great " propriety, baniſhed from all faſhionable companies, it would be abſurd to " inſtruct my pupils in an art thus become totally uſeleſs.

" As to *Mathematics*, I do not mean to ſhock the eyes of my faſhionable " ſtudents with angles and curve lines, nor do I wiſh to perplex and torment " them with long and laborious calculations; but I have agreed with an " ingenious gentleman, who will deliver Lectures on the *Doctrine of Chances*, " and inſtruct ladies and gentlemen in all the faſhionable *Games*. This Pro- " feſſor has already diſtinguiſhed himſelf in the great Academies of London " and Bath, in which he has been honoured with the degree of a *knowing* " *one*, a degree at leaſt equal to that of a doctor in any of the old-faſhioned " Univerſities.

" *Natural*

" *Natural Philoſophy* is beſt taught by experiments, and thoſe of the moſt " familiar kind. The *mechanic powers* from the *balance* to the *ſcrew* may " be ſufficiently explained and illuſtrated by the help of little machines, which " may be purchaſed at thoſe celebrated repoſitories of the arts called *Tun-* " *bridge Wareheuſes*. As it is perfectly genteel to be ſhort-ſighted, our " *Optical Lectures* will turn entirely on the moſt elegant and graceful manner " of applying the Opera-glaſs to the eye on proper occaſions. Thus will the " whole ſcience of opticks be ſimplified and reduced to one ſingle problem. " With regard to the doctrine of the *Equilibrium and preſſure of Fluids*, I " propoſe every day *after commons* to entertain the young gentlemen with " ſome curious and intereſting experiments concerning the aſcent and de- " ſcent of Fluids by the help of glaſs tubes in the forms of hollow cones and " cylinders; and as it would be paltry to perform theſe experiments with " water, I have contracted with an eminent wine-merchant for ſeveral " hogſheads of his beſt claret.

" A ſyſtem of modern *Ethicks* may be extracted from Lord Cheſterfield's " letters. Thoſe parts of that ſcience, which our great moraliſt has omitted, " or lightly touched, may be ſupplied from novels, plays, and political " pamphlets. The whole will form a complete body of practical morality " infinitely ſuperior to thoſe ſyſtems, which have been planned and recom- " mended by ſages and divines.

" *Claſſical learning* muſt not be omitted in a courſe of academick ſtudies. " I have heard that Claſſical authors are read for their purity and elegance " of ſtyle, their juſt and natural pictures of life and manners, and their in- " ſtructive precepts; but in all theſe they are I am confident greatly excelled " by our modern writers of novels. Inſtead therefore of ſtudying theſe " claſſicks, I propoſe to introduce a courſe of novel-reading; and as novel- " writers are generouſly producing every day freſh entertainment for the " publick, I intend to treat my pupils every year with a new courſe of novels " of the moſt refined and ſentimental kind. This part of my courſe is " principally intended for my female ſtudents, as ſince the decline of hair- " dreſſing young gentlemen have not leiſure for literary purſuits.

" I ſhall beſides have profeſſors, who will inſtruct the ſtudents in all " the faſhionable arts of dreſſing, dancing, lounging, &c. &c.

" If you, Mr. Flapper, will recommend to the publick this very uſeful " plan, I ſhall in addition to my other regulations direct that your paper " ſhall be bought, and if convenient read, by every ſtudent in my Academy.

" I am, Sir,

" Your obedient humble Servant,

" LUKE LOVEMODE."

DUBLIN:

Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.

[Price, Two Pence.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER LIV.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1796.

We muſt be *gentle*, now we are *Gentlemen*.

Shepherd in the *Winter's Tale*.

I CANNOT avoid thinking that what is uſually termed POLITENESS has not been ſeen ſufficiently in its proper point of view, nor recommended to attention by as forcible conſiderations as the ſubject admits of. It is too generally regarded as a mere external accompliſhment, exiſting only in the manners and not neceſſarily connected with any diſpoſition of the heart; but it may be much more juſtly conſidered as having its foundation in moral principle and as holding an important place amongſt the duties enjoined on us by the Author of our Being. In this light the neglect of it will amount to ſomething more than a foible or a deficiency in character; it will involve an abſolute breach of the obligations of humanity.

Let it be obſerved that by *Politeneſs* I mean, neither the empty complaiſance of a *petit maitre*, nor the artificial addreſs of a *courtier*, but I mean by it an habitual accommodation of our ordinary behaviour to the wiſhes and feelings of thoſe with whom we converſe. This is, unqueſtionably, the eſſential part of *Politeneſs*. Our exerciſe of it will, without doubt, be more or leſs perfect as we are more or leſs furniſhed with good ſenſe, with knowledge of the world, and with early habits of general correctneſs and propriety.

The importance of *Politeneſs*, in the ſenſe in which I have defined it, is ſo obvious as ſcarcely to require illuſtration. Formed, as we are, for ſociety —intereſted in each other's conduct by the radical tendencies of our nature, our cuſtomary intercourſe muſt neceſſarily be a conſtant ſource of mutual pain or pleaſure. Our actions can ſeldom be ſo minute as to be wholly barren of conſequences. Our very looks and geſtures will tend to increaſe or leſſen the happineſs of thoſe around us; trifling as they may appear in themſelves, they uſually bear ſome ſtamp of the diſpoſition which operates within— ſome mark of reſpect or contempt, of kindneſs or neglect, of good nature or moroſeneſs. No inſtruction is neceſſary to make their language intelligible, and no philoſophy is ſufficient to ſuppreſs the pleaſing or painful ſenſations which they occaſion.

It is evident that the ordinary commerce of ſociety turns much more upon trifles than on matters of ſerious concern. The former make up the daily routine, whilſt the latter only occur occaſionally; the uneaſineſſes or gratifications, which we cauſe to, or receive from, each other, muſt conſequently depend, for the moſt part, on the *minutiæ* of behaviour. Theſe conſtitute, as it were, the current caſh of ſocial life, in which the contributions of moſt men muſt be made, if made at all, to the general ſtock of human happineſs. To be negligent with reſpect to theſe, is of courſe to loſe the moſt certain means of doing good, which the circumſtances of the far greater number afford them; and on the other hand, to improve theſe ever recur-

ring opportunities as carefully as poſſible is at once one of the moſt effectual exerciſes, and moſt certain teſts of genuine benevolence.

The performance of ſuch acts of kindneſs as excite obſervation and call forth applauſe may ariſe from various other motives beſides real virtue; but the ſeizing on the numberleſs little occaſions of ſaying and doing humane things, which our common intercourſe with the world affords, is an indubitable proof, not only of the reality, but of the activity and vigilance of goodneſs. And what theſe kind offices want, individually, in magnitude, they make up, not only in facility of repetition but in certainty of effect. They only aim at giving a momentary gratification; but frequently, where there is any degree of virtuous ſenſibility, they do a great deal more. The tranſient courteſy of a ſtranger, ſhewn on ſome ſlight emergency, very often makes an impreſſion which the viciſſitudes of ſucceeding years do not efface. A tender expreſſion of ſympathy when ſome trivial accident had occurred—a readineſs to accommodate, amidſt circumſtances which added value to little attentions—the prompt relinquiſhing of a poſſeſſed advantage in favour of ſome one who appeared to need it more—theſe and ſuch like not only give a delicate delight at the preſent, but they are recurred to afterward with freſh pleaſure. They are cheriſhed in the memory, as giving an eaſy exerciſe to gratitude unaccompanied with any irkſome weight of obligation.

'Tis true that the duties of *politeneſs* may ſometimes be omitted through inadvertence even by thoſe that are habitually benevolent; but when we ſee them wantonly violated, or haughtily neglected, it is impoſſible not to ſuſpect the moral character of the defaulter. When, for inſtance, a pert countenanced youth is obſerved to ſhoulder half a dozen plain looking perſons in ſucceſſion, where the uncrouded ſtreet furniſhed ſufficient ſpace for each to hold his own path, who could hope, on acquaintance, to find ſuch an one poſſeſſed of a generous temper or a feeling heart? when another, not ſatisfied with annoying thoſe with whom he happens to come into contact, aſſails at a diſtance with a point-blank ſtare, in which the inſolence of diſdain is blended with the impertinence of curioſity, as if the creature roſe in his own eſtimation in proportion to his ſucceſs in embarraſſing his unoffending neighbours, it is certainly no violation of chriſtian charity to infer an utter want both of delicacy and common ſenſe. But above all, when I perceive one whoſe birth and fortune had given a hope of better things, ſeeking only to diſtinguiſh himſelf in company by affected abſence and a total careleſsneſs whether he pleaſes or offends—ſhewing a contemptuous unwillingneſs to take part in converſation himſelf and a rude inattention to what is ſaid by others, I acknowledge I feel a reſentment not to be expreſſed; becauſe here I diſcover much more than the mere vice or folly of an individual—I ſee a miſchief that muſt ſpread, a diſeaſe that will contaminate—I even dread the extinction of civilized life when the circulation of humanity thus ſtagnates in what providence deſigned to ſerve as the greater veins and arteries of the ſocial body.

The connexion between thoſe leſſer duties and the more ſignal exertions of beneficence is probably more cloſe than we are apt to imagine. If we accuſtom ourſelves to pay little or no regard to the feelings of thoſe about us, in the occurrences of common life, what can be expected but that at length we ſhould feel no concern even for their greateſt ſufferings? The

temper

temper of mind which would diſpoſe us to ſhove aſide, from mere wantonneſs, a quiet walker through the ſtreets, or to ſeek amuſement in perplexing ſimplicity or putting modeſty to the bluſh, when ſtrengthened by continued exerciſe, might fit us for beholding the perpetration of cruelty without emotion, or perhaps, ſhould we be placed in tempting circumſtances, for taking part in it ourſelves.

On the other hand, the uniform practice of thoſe little inſtances of kindneſs which every hour gives room for, will by degrees produce in us ſo fixed an habit, that it will become impoſſible to omit any duty which the law of charity can require. Sir *Philip Sidney*, it is well known, was celebrated throughout Europe not more for the gallantry of his ſpirit than for the gentleneſs of his manners. His ſtrict yet unconſtrained attention to every ſpecies of courteſy made him the delight of his contemporaries, and at the ſame time raiſed the native humanity of his temper into a ruling paſſion, which even the agonies of death could not overcome. When mortally wounded at the battle of Zutphen, and in the act of applying a draught of cold water to his lips, he obſerved near him a fainting ſoldier whoſe wiſtful looks ſeemed to entreat a ſhare of it. The thirſt of the Hero, burning as it was, yielded to his philanthrophy; he would not drink. "Take it," ſaid he, "to that unfortunate man; he requires it more than I do." Can we ſuppoſe that if Sir *Philip Sidney* had not taken pleaſure through life, in alleviating the pains and increaſing the comfort of others, he would thus, in his laſt moments, have done honour to human nature?

I do not, however, mean to aſſert that even the moſt accurate exerciſe of politeneſs, as it is now generally underſtood and practiſed, would produce any ſuch ſalutary effects. The view of it which has been given by its great modern teacher has no more to do with benevolence than with ſincerity. In *Lord Cheſterfield*'s account *politeneſs* is not the native ſmoothneſs of a benign diſpoſition, improved and brightened by education and a well directed commerce with the world, but on the contrary a mere ſuperficial varniſh, ſerving to conceal corrupt principles and foul deſigns: in a word, it is the art of managing our common intercourſe with ſociety ſo as moſt effectually to deceive one ſex, and moſt eaſily to ſeduce the other.

It muſt be granted, that in the detail of the noble author's ſyſtem, ſeveral juſt obſervations occur with reſpect to the externals of behaviour; but they are ſo completely independent of every tender or generous ſentiment—ſo excluſively derived from a ſelfiſh principle, and directed to an intereſted end, that, at the beſt, they are but like an elegant impreſſion on a baſe and counterfeit coin.

But the moſt painful conſideration is, that in proportion as this ſame coin has come into circulation, the ſterling gold of real politeneſs has diſappeared. This, however, is but a natural conſequence. For when the courteſies of ſocial intercourſe are regarded only as inſtruments of ſelfiſh policy, their ſphere of exerciſe will become as limited as the object at which they aim. The expreſſions of *politeneſs* will be meaſured out by the probabilities of perſonal advantage; they will be laviſhed where ſuperiors are to be conciliated; they will even not be ſpared where equals may be rendered uſeful; but as little or nothing can be looked for from inferiors, from ſtrangers, or even from tranſient acquaintances, on theſe the profeſſor of the modern *art of pleaſing* has no attentions to throw away.

I by no means intend to insinuate that we may not very fairly expect benefit to ourselves from the practice of politeness, as well as from that of every other virtue. And perhaps it may be asserted that scarcely any virtue is more likely to be beneficial to its possessor than genuine *politeness*. It seldom fails to draw upon itself an abundant return of that benevolence which it exerts. It increases the value and the attractiveness of every other useful or amiable quality. It is to intrinsic worth (as the very term intimates) what the polish given by the lapidary's wheel is to the richly veined pebble. It makes a man acceptable in society, popular in the world—a more pleasing, and therefore a more cultivated companion—a more endearing, and of course a more valuable friend. But, still, as we account him who performs external acts of piety or charity merely to secure the gratification of his ambition or his avarice, to be no better than a crafty hypocrite, so it is impossible to view the man of selfish unbenevolent civility in any other light than that of a despicable impostor.

I cannot but observe that amongst the infinite obligations we are under to the *Christian Religion* we have to reckon the first diffusion of genuine politeness in the world. The proud philosophy of the ancient Greeks had little tendency to produce mildness of demeanour, and nothing could be more directly hostile to it than the domineering haughtiness of the Romans. But the principles, the precepts, the examples of Christianity; all concurred to humanize the natures and soften the manners of those who embraced it. Where humility and charity were ruling principles in the heart, insolence and harshness would hardly be indulged in the conduct. The Christian code inculcated no point of practice with greater earnestness or frequency than the duty of avoiding every thing offensive either in word or action, "and of pleasing all "men for their good."—Above all, it was impossible to contemplate the character of its great lawgiver without being charmed into some degree of imitation of that sweet affability, that dignified condescension, that consummate courtesy, which distinguished him from mere mortals almost as much as the sublimity of his doctrine, or the majesty of his power. To this assuasive energy alone can we attribute it that amongst rude nations, and at a dark period the softness of humanity was blended with dauntless fortitude as its indispensable associate, that gentleness of manners became the essential characteristic of honourable birth and elevated rank; and that our *barbarous* ancestors acquired and handed down to us a refinement of sentiment and intercourse 'till then unknown to human society. It is as remarkable, as it is lamentable, that at this day, when the influence of Christianity has so visibly declined, the true principles of politeness have become weak in proportion. In Christianity, then, can we find the only certain restorative either of the good manners or the good order of society. The hollow dissimulation of a *Chesterfield*, and the savage ferocity of a *Paine*, may conquer, or even coalesce with the wisdom of the world. The infallible antidote of both is in that wisdom from above which is *peaceable* and *gentle—full of mercy and of good fruits, without partiality* and *without hypocrisy*.

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DUBLIN:
Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.
[Price, Two Pence.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER LV.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1796.

——— Cur non potiùs, teneroque columbo,
Et ſimilis regum pueris, pappare minutum
Poſcis, et iratus mammæ lallare recuſas?

PERSIUS.

To ſofter life, to downy eaſe remove,
Be fed, be cockered, like a Lady's dove.
Go, like a noble babe, once more to lap:
There, froward Maſter! ſquall for infant Pap.

TO THE FLAPPER.

SIR,

FEW of your papers have given me more ſatisfaction than that upon the reading of novels, perhaps, becauſe there are few ſubjects on which I am ſo well qualified to pronounce an opinion. In your deſcription of a mind "enfeebled by a long habit of being amuſed without preſent exertion to "underſtand, or wiſh to recollect," I recognize the former ſtate of my own. I was once, Sir, a moſt devout novel-reader. Naturally fond of books, I happened when but very young, to have acceſs to a large and diverſified collection; not having the advantage of a judicious friend to guide my choice, a bad taſte was ſoon contracted, and every hour that I could ſteal from buſineſs, or even from play, was devoted to the peruſal of books of mere amuſement. I have ſince had reaſon to lament that this propenſity was not earlier controuled. The ſame avidity for reading, which thus ſerved only to corrupt my taſte and conſume my time, had it been properly directed to works at once amuſing and inſtructive,---what a valuable ſtore of uſeful knowledge might it not have beſtowed! It was not long before I became ſenſible of this by mortifying experience. While at ſchool, the ſtrictneſs of diſcipline, and the eaſineſs of my exerciſes, enabled me, with a tolerably good capacity, to acquire ſome ſuperiority over my contemporaries; but upon my entrance into the College, the encreaſed difficulty of my ſtudies on the one hand, and the growing paſſion for frivolous reading on the other, ſoon made my buſineſs burdenſome and diſguſting. In conſequence, the little portion of fame, which had accompanied me from ſchool, was ſoon diſſipated; and competitors for academic honours ſtarted up even among thoſe, who had long bowed with deference to my acknowledged ſuperiority.

Sometimes, enflamed by emulation, I would for a day or two apply cloſely to my ſtudies---but my habit would return, and would whiſper the neceſſity of relaxation and the danger of intenſe labour.---A hint was ſufficient---I would ſeize a volume of *Smollet* or of *Fielding*---proceed inſenſibly from chapter to chapter---hour after hour would paſs away: in vain would I fling aſide the book, place myſelf gravely at my deſk, and ſpread open my folios:

folios: my mind would reſiſt all attempts to recall its attention---and 'till the fate of the principal *dramatis perſonæ* was determined, 'till I had fairly accompanied the hero of the tale to his death or his marriage, all things elſe were forgotten.

In this inglorious way paſſed the period of my Collegiate life. At length the deſire of my Father induced me to make choice of a laborious profeſſion. I repaired to the Temple, but thither my habits accompanied me. I had gone through half the Catalogue of a neighbouring Circulating Library, and not half through the firſt ſection of *Coke* upon *Littleton*, when my Father died, and left me poſſeſſed of a patrimony ſcarcely ſufficient to enable me to maintain the appearance of a Gentleman: I awoke to my ſituation: I was now forced to think, and I could not conceal from myſelf the neceſſity of inſtant exertion. I took lodgings at a farm-houſe in a part of the Country ſome miles diſtant from any Bookſeller's ſhop: my library was compoſed entirely of books neceſſary to my profeſſional ſtudies: my hoſt's conſiſted of a bible, an almanack, a few magazines, and a *Taplin's* farriery. For ſome time, I applied intenſely to my buſineſs: but by degrees I felt my old inclinations revive, and half condemned the precipitancy with which I had put it out of my own power to indulge them---I devoured the old magazines again and again: I dipped often into the *farriery*---even the almanack afforded me occaſional relief. Shall I confeſs it, Mr. Flapper, it was not 'till all theſe reſources were exhauſted, and 'till the craving of my appetite was become almoſt intolerable, that I hearkened to the recommendation of my honeſt Landlord, and, ſplenetic and almoſt deſpairing, had at length recourſe to his Bible. Ignorant of its contents, I was far from expecting amuſement from it: I reſorted to it from mere neceſſity. But I found it impoſſible to peruſe it with indifference: before I had proceeded far in the very firſt book, I felt a reſpect excited, which as I advanced, grew to admiration: I found it contained narrative equally intereſting and authentic; ſentiments natural but refined, elevated but not inflated, expreſſed in a ſtyle exquiſitely ſimple and ſublime. In ſhort, while the ſtudy of this ſacred volume afforded me that amuſement which the vitiated condition of my mind demanded, I found my taſte inſenſibly meliorated and corrected; and independently of the important truths which it unfolded to me, I am convinced, Sir, that I owe to it principally, the reſcue of my underſtanding from a ſtate of inert imbecillity, and its reſtoration to ſomewhat of its original health and vigour.

I have been induced, Mr. Flapper, to give you this ſhort hiſtory of myſelf, by way of a recommendatory preface to a few remarks which I am deſirous to offer to you. As I am not now afraid to venture occaſionally on the peruſal of a novel, I lately read one, which I am informed has gained ſome celebrity, and is at preſent in conſiderable circulation. I can make no better atonement for the time which I formerly waſted in ſuch reading, than by turning my dear bought experience to the advantage of thoſe who continue ſtill addicted to it: and I am ſure the Flapper will not think himſelf unworthily employed in warning ſo numerous a body as the novel readers of Ireland, againſt a book, the celebrity of which is perhaps undeſerved, and the circulation dangerous.

The main ſtory of the work in queſtion, (which is avowedly taken from the tale of the *Santon Barſiſa* in the *Guardian*, No. 148) is as follows. The hero of the piece is a *Monk*, the ſuperior of a monaſtery: poſſeſſed of great talents and great virtues. Human nature in him ſeems unaſſailable, except through the means of an over-weening pride, and of a conſtitution which

is

is repreſented as warm and vigorous. An agent deputed by Satan himſelf gifted by him with ſupernatural powers, and wearing the form of a beautiful woman, enters the monaſtery, diſguiſed in male attire: this ſuppoſed Novice ingratiates himſelf into the good graces of the Monk: his paſſions are inflamed by various artifices: in due time, his tempter diſcovers her ſex, and avows an endleſs and exceſſive paſſion---the friar, relying too much on himſelf, does not ſufficiently guard againſt the ſnares which are laid for him. Opportunities are afforded---he ſtruggles---but at length falls into guilt. From this crime, the infernal agent, ſtill wearing the form of his miſtreſs, leads him on to worſe. Urged by her inſtigations, and enabled by the helliſh powers which ſhe poſſeſſes, the wretch commits rape, inceſt, adultery, murder---at length detected, he is tried and condemned to ſuffer death. As his laſt moments approach, the tempter appears before him in his dungeon, ſtill wearing the deceitful appearance by which he had been at firſt betrayed---ſhe offers him liberty and happineſs on condition of his devoting himſelf eternally to the devil: ſhe preſſes every argument that his miſerable ſituation ſuggeſts---he refuſes---heſitates---conſents---in an inſtant the terrific form of Lucifer himſelf appears---he tenders the contract---the Monk pauſes for a moment and once more refuſes. Baffled and enraged, the devil departs. And now the hour of execution draws near: the wretched man hears the bolts of his priſon creak----the miniſters of death are at hand! in a frenzy of deſpair, he ſummons Lucifer again---ſigns the fatal contract, and inſtantly is carried off through the air to a wild mountain. Then the devil recounts to him the hiſtory of his temptations---the ſtratagems to which he had fallen a victim: then, taunting him with the laſt frailty, committed at the very moment when a pardon was about to be announced, he hurls him headlong from a precipice: his fall, tremendous as it is, does not terminate his life. He ſurvives for ſeveral days, in the midſt of tortures the moſt horrible. With this tale, which forms the principal plot, are brought together ſeveral epiſodes, and the ſtyle of the whole, it muſt be admitted, is neat and appropriate; the work is alſo embelliſhed with poetry, and contains one or two pieces of real merit. It is not my intention to make any obſervations on the glaring improbability of the ſupernatural agency by which the plot is conducted. It is in a moral, not in a critical view, that it more eſpecially demands the animadverſion of thoſe, who are anxious to preſerve and improve the purity of public manners.

The moral which the Author in queſtion profeſſes to inculcate, is the neceſſity of reſiſting the firſt temptations to ſin: but in order to preſs this with effect upon his reader, he ſhould have repreſented thoſe temptations, and thoſe only, to which we are all expoſed. The great enemy of mankind is at this day no otherwiſe diſcoverable among us than by his operations in our hearts. He ought therefore to be repreſented only by the effects which are there produced by him. We ſhould then be duly affected by the moral, becauſe there would be nothing in the caſe, that might not by poſſibility become our own. But when we ſee a wretch expoſed to perpetual ſolicitation by the devil in perſon, ſuggeſting evil things, and furniſhing ſupernatural means of accompliſhing them, the moral is loſt in the improbability of the ſtory: and we are more diſpoſed to queſtion the juſtice of a puniſhment which human nature had ſcarcely power to eſcape, than to deprecate a temptation to which we never can be ſubject.

I have,

I have, however, ſtill weightier objections to this author on the ground of morality: that his profeſſed moral does not flow naturally or neceſſarily from the ſtory, might poſſibly be excuſed upon conſidering the nature of the work and of the materials which he had choſen. But the book abounds with paſſages plainly and unequivocally *immoral:* the author avails himſelf of every opportunity which his ſubject affords him, to introduce ſcenes of the moſt wanton and immodeſt nature, deſcribed in terms ſcarcely decent: too numerous to be overlooked by the moſt haſty, too circumſtantial to be miſunderſtood by the moſt ignorant of his readers. In ſhort, Sir, this book, affecting to have a moral tendency, and filled with groſs impurity, reminds me of a celebrated trial of *crim. con.* which was publiſhed laſt winter, the preface to which bewailed in pompous terms, the rapid encreaſe of adultery in this kingdom, and humbly recommended to the youth of both ſexes, as an antidote, a careful peruſal of the ſcenes of licentiouſneſs that were emblazoned in the ſubſequent pages.

One ſhort obſervation more, Mr. Flapper, upon a paſſage which, for the novelty of the poſition contained in it, deſerves to be noticed. A female character is introduced, as accompliſhed as the author could make her: ſhe has an only daughter whoſe education occupies her whole attention, and who repays her by her great proficiency: this young Lady is diſcovered reading--the holy ſcriptures are her ſtudy---but ſhe ſtudies them in a manuſcript of her mother's compilation; becauſe, as we are gravely told, the ſacred book itſelf is too full of groſs indelicacy and indecency to be put into the hands of a virtuous young woman! what a pity that the author has not followed up this notable diſcovery, by preſenting the world with a new edition of the Bible, purged of its immoralities by his own chaſte hand, or that he has not at leaſt referred us to thoſe paſſages which in his opinion are ſo likely to pollute the mind of youth! And what ignorance have the moſt enlightened of the Infidel writers betrayed, who, amid their doubts of the authenticity of the ſacred writings and their cavils on the evidence adduced to ſupport it, ſcruple not to bear the fulleſt teſtimony to the inimitable delicacy of ſentiment and purity of expreſſion abounding in the Bible!

I am Sir, &c. &c.

AURELIUS.

DUBLIN:
Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.
[Price, Two Pence.]

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[A Letter Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER LVI.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1796.

Nunc in Ariſtippi furtim præcepta relabor. HORACE.

A FEW evenings ago I was accidentally engaged in a converſation on the advantages of a liberal education, which ſome perſon in the company had thought fit to deny, and expatiated more particularly on its tendency to improve the religious character; when I was at once checked by my antagoniſt, who appealed to the evidence of fact, and triumphantly demanded, whether I had indeed obſerved the prevalence of religious ſerioufneſs in the learned profeſſions. I felt the force of his objection; and as I make it an invariable rule, not to ſuffer myſelf to be tempted on any occaſion to diſpute for victory, I acknowledged that I felt it, and that I thought to examine the cauſes which ſo often defeated the natural operation of mental improvement, a ſubject truly worthy of attention. Soon afterwards I quitted the company, and returned home, ruminating on the various ſeductions which beſet profeſſional men; when I was agreeably ſurpriſed at finding on my table the following letter ſent to me by my publiſher.

TO THE FLAPPER.

SIR,

The ſtroke of misfortune has made me your correſpondent; but my wiſh is to warn, not to complain. The firſt tumult of my grief has ſubſided; and I have learned to reverence, as the ſalutary chaſtiſement of providence, a ſtroke which has annihilated my ſchemes of happineſs. Perhaps it was the only ſide, on which the habitual levity of my mind was aſſailable. Sickneſs, even my own, I ſhould probably from cuſtom have regarded merely as an incident of my profeſſion; but to be deprived thus prematurely of a wife, on whom I doated; to ſee before me, inſtead of the indulgence of reciprocal attachment, a dreary void without one object to intereſt the heart, has compelled my mind to turn inwards upon itſelf. The reſult of this ſelf-examination, which has been thus forced upon me, has opened to my view the fallacy of the principles upon which I have hitherto acted; and the only gratification of which I am now capable, muſt be derived from the reflection, that I have endeavoured to render my private calamity beneficial to thoſe, whom adverſity may not have awakened to reflection.

I am, Sir, a Phyſician; and though perhaps I have not been at any time, what may with propriety be called a *Deiſt*, I could not until very lately advance any juſt pretenſions to the name of *Chriſtian*. It has been the occupation of my melancholy hours to retrace thoſe incidents of my life, which formerly effaced from my mind every ſerious thought on the ſubject of religion; and as there has not been any event in my hiſtory, which is not common to all young men who engage in the ſame profeſſion, the narrative may poſſibly afford a ſalutary admonition.

The early part of my education did not contain any thing deſerving of obſervation, as it had not any particular reference to the profeſſion for which I was deſigned. I ſhall therefore begin my ſtory at my arrival in Edinburgh, whither I was ſent for the purpoſe of attending the lectures of the juſtly celebrated medical profeſſors of that Univerſity. It was here that my religious principles received their firſt ſhock. Influenced by a national partiality, which, as flowing from a patriotic principle, I am in moſt inſtances diſpoſed to commend, and to wiſh more prevalent among my own countrymen; the greater part of my new acquaintances revered *Hume* as the firſt of philoſophers, and adopted without heſitation all his cavils at religion. But ſtrong as this motive was, it was corroborated by others. The religious perſuaſion of that country is gloomy and auſtere, and has therefore little attraction for thoſe, whom opulence invites to indulgence, or youth prompts to levity. The Clergy alſo, who cannot from whatever cauſe become deſpiſed without prejudice to the religion which they inculcate, are there poorly provided for; and from the thoughtleſs and gay, poverty is ill fitted to claim deference with ſucceſs. The operation of theſe and ſimilar cauſes had rendered almoſt all with whom I aſſociated profeſſed unbelievers; and the falſe ſhame of maintaining what I heard decried as prejudices, joined to the apparent force of arguments, which to me were new, and unacquainted as I was with inquiries of this nature, ſeemed wholly unanſwerable, half converted me to their opinions.

In this doubtful ſtate of mind, wavering between the principles inſtilled by a ſerious education in my earlier years, and the ſcepticiſm by which my youth had been aſſailed, I returned home, and engaged in my profeſſion. This part of my hiſtory will furniſh a variety of cauſes, which tended ſtill farther to corrupt my mind.

Such is the nature of man, that he ſeldom thinks ſeriouſly of his mortality, except when the loſs of ſome dear friend interrupts the deluſive dream, which repreſents this life with its purſuits and enjoyments as to laſt for ever. But this ſalutary warning is loſt to the phyſician. His trade is with the ſick and the dying. The feelings of his nature are blunted by the habits of his profeſſion. Thoſe ſcenes, which give to others the deepeſt impreſſions of melancholy, are to him the ordinary means of his ſubſiſtence. His ears are ſhut to thoſe awakening calls, which draw off the attention from the buſineſs or pleaſures of life. But though rendered callous by habit to the moral and religious feeling moſt commonly excited in the houſe of mourning, he is expoſed to an impreſſion of a different kind. Amidſt the uncertainties of medical ſcience and the complications of diſeaſe, he often laments that he has committed, perhaps, fatal errors; and the irkſomeneſs of this feeling too often drives him to diſſipation for relief. To mix with ſociety he will ſuppoſe neceſſary for the purpoſe of cultivating connections, which may advance him in his profeſſion; and by degrees the wiſh of mental recollection will be loſt with the opportunity.

But the art profeſſed by the Phyſician, as well as the nature of its practice, has a tendency to looſen the hold of religious principle on the mind. It is indeed true that *we are fearfully and wonderfully made*, and the mere view of our frame muſt to an unprejudiced obſerver diſplay the divine wiſdom of its maker: but when the mind turns from the contemplation of the ſtructure of man, to inveſtigate the cauſes and the remedies of the diſeaſes which undermine it: when it ſees the ſcanty limits of real knowledge, and the wide range of venturous conjecture; when it ſees the practice of one generation exploded by that of a ſecond, which in its turn gives place to the newer methods of a third; it feels an irreſiſtible bias to novelty of ſpeculation, and an averſion to any opinions which have been eſtabliſhed.

To

To theſe conſiderations may be added yet another, derived from public opinion. A phyſician is the creature of popularity. Though the profeſſional ſucceſs of a lawyer is in ſome meaſure dependant on accidental cauſes, yet his talents are tried by a fairer ſtandard. They are appretiated by ſucceſs, where competition is open and direct, and the deciſion public and authoritative. But who can eaſily eſtimate the comparative merits of two candidates for medical fame? In the varieties of human conſtitutions and the combinations of diſtempers, who can diſcover two caſes preciſely ſimilar, and determine which of two phyſicians has the preferable claim? So ſlight and ſo various are the occaſions which introduce the practitioners of medicine to fame and affluence, that Doctor Johnſon has obſerved, that no hiſtory could afford more entertainment than a hiſtory of the fortunes of phyſicians. The man, whoſe ſucceſs depends upon opinion, whilſt that opinion itſelf reſts upon ſo ſlender a foundation, is ſtrongly tempted to buttreſs the tottering edifice by a perpetual diſplay of ſuperior wiſdom. The indolence of the public often acquieſces in the claims of the preſuming, and the reaſonableneſs of thoſe claims it is in this caſe difficult to aſcertain. From him, whoſe whole conduct is naturally influenced by the wiſh of appearing poſſeſſed of judgment, which prejudice cannot bias, nor fallacy miſlead, truths admitted by the maſs of mankind can ſcarcely experience an impartial reception. To acknowledge what is believed implicitly by the vulgar, can evince no ſuperiority.

Theſe cauſes, Mr. Flapper, compleated what my education had begun. Staggered in my religious belief by the converſation of my fellow-ſtudents, I commenced my career of practice without one ſteady principle; and every day I became more alienated from every conſideration of my greateſt intereſt as well as duty; though I did not feel myſelf diſpoſed to profeſs myſelf its oppoſer. At length I was viſited by the ſevereſt affliction which a feeling mind can ſuffer. She, in whom I had treaſured all my hopes, for whoſe ſake chiefly I had deſired proſperity, and with whom alone it could afford me pleaſure, was torn from me---My mind ſunk back upon itſelf. The ſubtleties of metaphyſical cavils no longer gratified its pride; the affectation aſſumed for the attainment of profeſſional ſucceſs became diſguſting; the theories of my profeſſion itſelf became indifferent; and death, which habit had formerly rendered familiar, now became ever preſent to my mind. In this gloom of mourning one only idea beamed on my deſpondency. That we might meet again---that hope which religion alone can authorize---ſtole upon my thoughts, and brought me back to the ſentiments of my early years.

I have ſent you, Sir, this retroſpective view of the hiſtory of my mind, in the hope that it may either tend to warn from the ſame error thoſe, who are expoſed to the ſame ſeductions; or if it ſhould fail to do this, that it might at leaſt remove from the minds of the public that prejudice, which muſt naturally diſpoſe them to be influenced by a profeſſion, acknowledged to be eminently diſtinguiſhed in many inſtances by a liberal ſpirit of general inquiry.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

CELSUS.

My Correſpondent ſeems to have well conſidered the caſe of thoſe of his own profeſſion, which is a leſs ſimple one, with regard to the ſubject of this Paper, than that of the profeſſion of the bar. On the one hand the former is of a more philoſophical ſpirit, as its object is the ſtudy of nature, not of the voluntary, and in many inſtances arbitrary, compacts of men; and its profeſſors are in their practice removed from that contentious buſtle, in which thoſe of the latter are involved: but on the other hand the temptations to irreligious levity appear to be numerous. In the latter profeſſions thoſe cauſes ſeem few and obvious, however frequently we muſt lament their baneful operation. Sent at the moſt dangerous period of life to the moſt alluring ſcene of pleaſure; far removed, not only from the reſtraints of diſcipline, but alſo from the preſence of thoſe, for whoſe favour they might be anxious; they muſt have been deeply indeed impreſſed with religious principles, who retain them after ſo powerful a trial. Should they have endured this firſt violent ſhock of youthful temptation, they are again expoſed to ſeductions of a profeſſional nature. Their lives are employed in the ſearch, not of truth, but of arguments. Engaged in promiſcuous diſputation, and exerciſed in a kind of intellectual warfare, it is not from ſuch minds that a ſerious and ſteady regard for religious truths can in general be expected. If to this we add that they, though not equally with phyſicians, are intereſted in the affectation of ſuperior wiſdom; and that the practice of their profeſſion has a tendency to narrow the mind by bringing the villanies of mankind perpetually before it; we ſhall not, I believe, find it difficult to explain the indifference to religion, which may too often be ſeen in thoſe, whoſe minds have received all the improvement which a liberal education could beſtow.

E.

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The Flapper.

Number LVII.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1796.

THE love of truth and of virtue, as it is the nobleſt impulſe of the human mind, ſo is it the quality upon which the moſt important varieties of the human character principally depend, and by which moral and intellectual excellence can be beſt weighed and appreciated. Wherever this divine ſentiment predominates, the judgment ſeldom will err or the man tranſgreſs, even though the underſtanding be feeble, and the inſtincts weak; but when it is torpid, the moſt powerful faculties, and the moſt energetic feelings, conduce but little to the promotion of truth, and ſtrongly impede the practice of virtue.

When I behold a man whoſe mind is ſubtle and ingenious, yet whoſe judgment is weak and ſhallow, who can diſcover proofs with quickneſs, and apply them with vigour, yet who cannot eſtimate their weight, or determine their preponderancy, who is irreſiſtible in argument, but impotent in deciſion, I can no otherwiſe account for this apparent incongruity, but by ſuppoſing that he is indifferent about where the truth lyes, or how the concluſion ought to be drawn. I muſt attribute this argumentative vigour, and imbecility of judgment, to a conſtant purſuit of praiſe, and an habitual diſregard of truth.

In the ſame manner do I explain the phenomenon, when I perceive in a mean or vicious character, a quick perception of the beauties of virtue, and a prompt though tranſient ſenſibility to touching narrations of diſtreſs, or effuſions of generous ſentiment. I cannot but lament, that ſympathies ſo aptly formed to nurture virtue and diffuſe happineſs, ſhould be ſo perverted, and that a nice perception of right ſhould co-exiſt with a general preference of wrong.

I believe nature ſeldom implants a ſtrong paſſion which cannot be gratified. The man who loves truth, poſſibly may not be furniſhed with the moſt vigorous or the brighteſt faculties for its attainment. He, however, ſupplies in induſtry what he wants in ſtrength, and compenſates for the ſlowneſs of his movements, by the undeviating regularity of his progreſs. Beſides, the faculties of the mind are invigorated by exerciſe, and the habit of juſt and accurate reflection grows into a kind of inſtinctive readineſs in detecting error, and rejecting falſehood. It has been ſaid by ſome philoſophers, that all truths are ſo connected and aſſociated, that from any one taken as a principle, every other might be deduced, if the mind were ſufficiently acute and comprehenſive. Though this may in its utmoſt extent be rejected as an extravagant paradox, I believe it is unqueſtionably true, that there is in knowledge a kind of intellectual magnetiſm, which attracts that to which it moſt aſſimilates, and that the treaſures of the mind like external weath, accumulate the quicker, the more they have accumulated.

It is conceived by many that quickneſs of parts and facility of mind naturally obſtruct juſtneſs of thought, inaſmuch as it is difficult to arrange and repeat ideas, which croud upon each other in rapid ſucceſſion---hence the commonly received notion, that wit and judgment cannot be poſſeſſed in any eminent degree by the ſame perſon. On the contrary, I conceive, that the moſt active mind is moſt luminous, and that when the memory operates with the greateſt facility, there is the greater opportunity for the toil of inveſtigation and the labours of judgment, and that the more abundant the materials of knowledge are, the more will knowledge itſelf abound. The difference ſtill principally depends upon the love of truth, and the ardour with which enquiry is proſecuted.---In fertile minds the combinations which delight are eaſily formed, and the reward of preſent applauſe obvious and alluring---he who loves not truth will not ſeek it, and it avails nothing whether it requires a painful reſearch, or offers itſelf almoſt ſpontaneouſly to him who is indifferent about its poſſeſſion.

Hilario and Eugenio were both educated in the ſame ſchool and the ſame Univerſity--Hilario, though little addicted to ſtudy or reflection, was deemed a genius almoſt from his cradle, and never failed to diſtinguiſh himſelf in

any

any ſcholaſtic exerciſe to which his verſatile vanity ſuffered him to pay any attention.---By Eugenio ſtudy from the beginning was felt as a duty and ſoon was practiſed as a pleaſure.---The academic honours which he obtained were, however, conſidered as the hard-earned fruits of plodding induſtry, while Hilario derived character from his very defeats, amongſt his contemporaries, who eagerly anticipated the time when his emancipated genius would aſtoniſh mankind.---The laxity of his morals perhaps conſpired with the ſplendour of his talents in generating this expectation, by freeing his converſation from the reſtraints of religion and decorum, and by furniſhing him with frequent opportunities of diſplaying the fertility of his reſources in extricating himſelf from danger and from difficulties. In Eugenio reflection was a foe to loquacity, and while his mind was occupied in inveſtigation or ſuſpended in doubt upon intereſting ſubjects, his taciturnity and reſerve were imputed to dullneſs of faculties, or ſullenneſs of temper.

Mature years have much diſappointed juvenile expectation in reſpect of Hilario and Eugenio.---Not that Hilario is not ſtill admired and ſtill followed. A train of diſſipated idolaters ſtill pay homage to his variegated, humane and even ſparkling conviviality---But without a ſingle friend or one ſteady rational admirer he laviſhes the treaſures of his mind without the ſlighteſt advantage to himſelf or to others---though his converſation never flags and his life is even buſtling, no ſentiment even eſcapes him which is remembered for its wiſdom, and there is ſcarcely an action of his life which he ought not to wiſh ſhould be forgotten.---With eloquence the moſt dazzling, he never perſuades, with argument the moſt acute, he never convinces--What ſympathy can he inſpire, whom nobody believes to be ſincere, or how can he influence others, whoſe judgment is deſpiſed and diſregarded? ---reflection has not ſtored his mind with principles, and on every ſubject which he diſcuſſes, conſiderations which meditation would have rejected, croud upon his fancy, and fertilize his diſcourſe, but bewilder his reaſon and overwhelm his judgment.

How different is the ſtate and eſtimation of Eugenio!---every ſucceſſive year has added to the vigour of his intellect, and to the dignity of his character. His mind ſhrinks from falſehood as his body does from pain.---The inveſtigation of to-day fades not by to-morrow, but eſtabliſhes a new foundation of knowledge, upon which he may ſecurely build, and from which he may ſpring to freſh diſcoveries. Habitual reflection upon ſuch topicks as ought to engage the conſideration of man, is in him a ſuperior ſubſtitute for quickneſs of conjecture, and it would require an intimate acquaintance with the progreſs of his mind, not to believe that he was naturally quick and inſtinctively ſagacious. The early ſterility of his converſation has meliorated if not into copious and florid diſcourſe, at leaſt into ſententious and impreſſive communication. Clearneſs of ideas has given facility to his ſpeech, and internal conviction, and a zeal to baniſh error and promote happineſs, animate his converſation. His ſociety is courted by the wiſe and the virtuous---his friendſhip is conſidered to be a teſt of high merit.---In all difficulties he is conſulted and followed---His opiñions are repeated as maxims of wiſdom, and his life held out as an example for general imitation.

S.

DUBLIN:

Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.

[Price, Two Pence.]

The Editor will thankfully receive from the Friends of Literature, any communications they may favour him with on the ſubjects appropriated to the nature of this publication.

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[A Letter Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER LVIII.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1796.

——————————Animam ſic ſemper eandem
Eſſe, ſed in varias doceo migrare figuras. OVID.

The mind is the ſame, but circumſtances are altered.

IT has often been aſſerted that the manners of mankind are in all ages intrinſically the ſame, however they may from caſual circumſtances receive various external modifications. Though I am very far from admitting the truth of a principle, which denies all real improvement, and conſequently diſcourages all exertion; it muſt yet be acknowledged that in many inſtances changes of manners are only apparent, and that a ſtriking reſemblance may be diſcovered by an attentive obſerver between cuſtoms and ſituations at the firſt view the moſt remote from each other. It may afford ſome entertainment, and poſſibly ſome inſtruction, to my readers, if I point out one of thoſe caſes of real reſemblance and apparent contraſt.

There can ſcarcely be imagined a greater apparent oppoſition than between the manners of the fine Gentlemen of the preſent day and thoſe of the Monks of the dark ages; and yet I will venture to maintain that a little reflection will enable us to perceive a variety of circumſtances, in which they entirely correſpond, and will convince us, that thoſe in which they ſeem to differ ſo widely, are only caſual modifications. The firſt grand circumſtance of reſemblance conſiſts in the character of idlers equally applicable to each. Supported by the induſtrious part of the community, neither did the ancient Monk, nor does the modern fine Gentleman make any adequate return. That active ſuperintendance of the political concerns of their country, which is the portion of induſtry due to ſociety from ſuperior ſtation, is as remote from the ſelfiſh indolence of the latter; as a diligent attention to its ſpiritual intereſts was foreign to the cloiſtered inactivity of the former. This circumſtance of idleneſs is however a very general reſemblance. In other reſpects we ſhall find a more particular correſpondence.

One principal characteriſtick of the monaſtick inſtitutions was a ſeparation from the ſociety of that ſex, which were deſigned by providence to augment the comforts and alleviate the evils of life. In this they are cloſely followed by the rules of modern faſhion. The fine Gentleman in a great degree ſecludes himſelf from female intercourſe. In different parts of this

city monaſteries have been erected, to one of which every man, who has any pretenſions to figure and ſpirit, repairs regularly as ſoon as the day commences, which according to the preſent rules of the order is about two o'clock; and, except a ſhort portion of time employed in going rapidly through certain ſtreets on horſeback, which part of the rule correſponds to the ſtated cloiſtered walk of their proto-types the Monks; in this he continues, till having performed his midnight vigils, he is permitted to return home. If he ſhould be induced to deviate from this male ſociety of his brethren of faſhion, he yet contents himſelf with the company of the moſt profligate of the other ſex; thus manifeſting, even in his departure from the rigour of monaſtick regulations, a diſpoſition to debar himſelf from the pleaſures of an intercourſe with whatever is truly amiable in the female world.

Another general characteriſtick was a vow of voluntary poverty, and in this reſpect alſo a conſiderable reſemblance is obſervable. The man of faſhion does not indeed at once ſurrender his property to the ſociety, when he firſt becomes a member; but the iſſue is commonly the ſame in both caſes. Inſtead of a voluntary vow of poverty, he voluntarily ſubjects his property to the hazards of gaming; and as the ancient monaſtery was enriched by the fortunes of its members, ſo the proprietors of the modern gaming-club are in general the only perſons, who derive any emolument from the ſacrifices daily made by thoſe who have the honour to be admitted.

In one circumſtance indeed there is a ſlight diſagreement. Though theſe modern monaſteries, like the ancient, are uſually under the direction of ſome one member diſtinguiſhed by a vigorous obſervation of the rules of the order; yet in them the choice does not uſually fall on the more ancient, whoſe characters have been eſtabliſhed by long-continued trials. Among our Monks the pre-eminence is uſually given to the youngeſt member of the ſociety, who becoming in a ſhort time diſqualified in fortune and conſtitution for a ſpirited obſervance of its regulations, ſpeedily reſigns his place to ſome new candidate for monaſtick diſtinction. Notwithſtanding this inconſiderable exception, I am inclined to think, that uſeleſs leiſure, ſeparation from the other ſex, and a voluntary dereliction of the goods of fortune are ſufficient to form a ſtriking ſimilitude between theſe two deſcriptions of men.

One circumſtance, of which I have lately been informed, induces me to believe, that the modern will aſſimilate ſtill more to the ancient inſtitutions. It has been reported to me that ſome young Clergymen have become members of theſe faſhionable monaſteries. If this cuſtom ſhould become general, it ſeems reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that from the ſpirit of their order they will gradually remove any little circumſtances of diſagreement, which may at preſent diſtinguiſh the modern Monks of faſhion from thoſe of ancient times;

times; and thoſe commodious ſtructures, which have been appropriated to their uſe in Kildare-ſtreet, Sackville-ſtreet and College-green, may recover for this country its long loſt title of the Iſland of Saints.

Having thus pointed out to my readers a correſpondence between the manners of the male part of ſociety in modern and ancient times, where at the firſt view a conſiderable difference may ſeem to ſubſiſt; I will conclude this Paper with ſome obſervations on the faſhionable manners of that ſex, whoſe improvement has generally been thought the more peculiar province of the Periodical Eſſayiſt.

Much has been ſaid by many writers on the important influence of the female ſex on public manners. That winning ſoftneſs, by which they are characterized, gives them, we are told, ſuch an aſcendancy over the mind of man, as enables them to mould at their pleaſure that contradictory compoſition of pride and weakneſs. It may have been ſo in former times; but he, who ſhould now talk in this manner, would betray a very groſs ignorance of the preſent ſtile of faſhionable life. The retired baſhfulneſs of romance, which winds up the lover's imagination to the higheſt degree of ſenſibility, is not to be found under a coachman's ſurtout driving a curricle at full ſpeed through the crouded ſtreets; nor, when the two ſexes caſually meet at public places, is the familiar buckiſh ſalutation, with which the ladies recognize their male acquaintances, well adapted to procure for them that commanding influence. When I have happened to be preſent at a rencounter of this kind, I could not avoid imagining that I was at a maſquerade, in which ſome young bucks, who had aſſumed the female dreſs, were amuſing themſelves with the whim of retaining their own manners; or at leaſt indulging themſelves in the immemorial privilege of maſquerades, that of neglecting to ſupport the adopted character.

This ſyſtem of faſhionable manners is no doubt very amuſing to the fair ſex. It frees them from much of that irkſome reſtraint, which the rules of old-faſhioned reſerve impoſed on them; it gratifies their independence by placing them in ſome degree on an equality with the other ſex; and it is ſtill further recommended by the delightful frolick of acting in a ſphere, for which it is evident nature had never deſigned them. However I cannot but think that upon the whole they are loſers by the new ſyſtem, ſince they are after all very poor bucks. They are not enabled by it to throw off entirely the ſubordination, which has generally been, though in very different degrees, the lot of their ſex; and they have loſt that empire of the mind, which the pride of man freely ſurrenders to female gentleneſs and modeſty.

I have been led by the reſemblance already remarked in the manners of the male part of the faſhionable world, to endeavour to diſcover the precedent of female behaviour; and the inquiry has coſt me much conſideration. As we had been lately infeſted by a ſet of male ſavages of the Cherokee tribe, I examined all the accounts, which have been publiſhed of the

conduct

conduct of the women of that nation, but could not find any thing ſatisfactory. Uncivilized man deſpiſes the bodily weakneſs, and is inſenſible to the mental influence of the other ſex. Diſappointed in my firſt attempt, I then ſearched among the nations of antiquity for inſtances of female buckiſhneſs. In this ſearch I met with ſome anecdotes of the great aſcendancy of the Spartan women, which at firſt attracted my attention; but I ſoon perceived that they were not bucks. They were uſeful citizens, who managed the affairs of the ſtate while their huſbands were engaged in war, and only aſſumed the importance which they deemed due to their ſervices. Still leſs can the famed Amazons be conſidered as forming a fair parallel. They, if ever there were ſuch ladies, baniſhed the men from among them; which does not by any means appear to be the plan of the faſhionable females of the preſent age. At length, however, I diſcovered that, for which I had ſo long looked. In the ſtrictures of one of the ancient Flappers, whoſe name was Juvenal, I ſaw that in the laſt ages of the Roman government, when every public and private principle had degenerated, the women of faſhion were complete bucks.

Inſtead of drawing any harſh concluſions from this unpleaſant parrallel, I will beg leave to offer my advice to my fair and faſhionable readers. It is a common obſervation, and like moſt of thoſe traditions of general experience for the greater part a true one, that it is beſt to be in a medium; but in this very thing conſiſts, in my opinion, the error of my country-women. The truly reſpectable preſident of the Royal Iriſh Academy has, in the tranſactions of that academy, given an account of the ſingular cuſtoms of the iſland of Metelin, which I would rather recommend to their imitation. There the women have completely put down the men. They do not baniſh them like the Amazons, nor take care of their affairs while they are abſent like the ladies of Sparta, nor aukwardly and imperfectly imitate them like the Roman and Iriſh women of faſhion; but they reduce them to a ſtate of ſubſerviency and controul, and enjoy the unreſtrained liberty and privileges of genuine female bucks.

Should my fair readers think it not adviſable to proceed to this extremity, I am humbly of opinion, that it would be more agreeable to their true intereſts to return to that rank, in which providence ſeemed to have placed them. They would not indeed figure quite ſo much in public, but they would be treated with vaſtly more real regard in private: they would not enjoy altogether ſo much liberty, but they would poſſeſs much more of that power, which is moſt pleaſing to a delicate and ſentimental mind; a power over the affections of thoſe with whom they are connected, a power founded on eſteem.

E.

DUBLIN:
Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.
[Price, Two Pence.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER LIX.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1796.

Et tu quoque, Brute!
And thou too, Franklin!

IN one of my earlieſt papers I made ſome obſervations on the general indifference to literary improvement, which is ſufficiently obſervable in this country; and, while I blamed that claſs of reading, which alone prevailed in any conſiderable degree among my fair countrywomen, I took occaſion to recommend, that they would ſubſtitute true inſtead of feigned Biography. To engage attention, the characters, whoſe hiſtories are related, muſt unqueſtionably be perſons diſtinguiſhed from the maſs of mankind, by peculiar talents or ſingular circumſtances; but the ſame bad conſequences will not attend this deviation from the ordinary ſtandard of human characters and events in real, as in fictitious narratives. The reader will not ſo eaſily be induced by the peruſal of a true account of ſome known character, to ſuppoſe, that he is himſelf alſo diſtinguiſhed by talents or ſituation, and to apply to his own conduct, without modification or correction, the principles, by which the perſon, of whom he reads, has been influenced; as the reader of novels is to imagine, that youth ſhould be guided only by a romantic extravagance of paſſion; that the indulgence of this extravagance conſtitutes the whole buſineſs of life; that all ſhould require, in the objects of their choice, a perfection beyond the common lot of mortality; and that this perfection is to be appretiated by exterior elegance, which is the caſual gift of nature or ſituation, or by refinement of feeling, which may be affected by the deſigning.

We have within theſe few years been favoured with authentic relations of ſeveral eminent characters, from which I ſhall, for the ſubject of the preſent paper, ſelect that of the celebrated Doctor Franklin. He has publiſhed to the world his own hiſtory, with that ſimple ſincerity which bears the ſtamp of truth; and I think, that I ſhould conſiderably aſſiſt my younger readers in ſtudying with advantage the accounts of remarkable perſons, if I ſhould, for their inſtruction, examine the circumſtances, which appear principally to have influenced his moral and religious character. To emulate his literary or political eminence can belong but to few; but all may profit by conſidering attentively, what thoſe circumſtances were, which baniſhed from that

heart, which ſeems to have expanded with every benevolent feeling for the happineſs of mankind, all regard for revealed religion.

But before I enter upon that examination, which ſo few, perhaps none, can bear; let me pay the due tribute of reſpect to the immortal name of Franklin. Father of American philoſophy, and firſt great champion of American liberty, if in the unremitting induſtry of his uſeful life---if in the inceſſant efforts to emerge from poverty, which employed his youth---if amidſt thoſe philoſophical inquiries of his manhood, which formed a new æra in ſcience, thoſe political ſtruggles of his age, which gave independence to America, and whoſe influence upon the nations of Europe the underſtanding in vain attempts to calculate; even his ſuperior mind could not find leiſure for reviewing and rejecting all the errors of his early years; the infidel can derive little ſanction from the authority of his example, unleſs he can prove, that his life is paſſed in equal activity, and his exertions are equally directed to the happineſs of mankind.

To a ſuperficial obſerver, this great man may appear to have himſelf given a natural and ſatisfactory account of the origin of his infidelity, ſince, in his hiſtory, he has informed us, that the peruſal of ſceptical books had firſt made him doubt the truth of Chriſtianity, and that ſome attempts to refute them ſeemed to him ſo unſucceſsful, as to render him a confirmed infidel. Cauſes ſuch as theſe may have alienated from Chriſtianity many an indolent inquirer, who, finding that the doctrines of religion had not been unoppoſed, diſmiſſed the controverſy with indifference to avoid the labour of farther examination; but ſeems inſufficient to have ſeduced the powerful and philoſophic mind of Franklin. Some internal diſpoſitions as well as external circumſtances muſt have combined to render him ſo eaſy a conqueſt, who would with indefatigable ardour have inveſtigated a difficulty in ſpeculative ſcience, or maintained a political ſtruggle with inflexible conſtancy. Theſe diſpoſitions and theſe circumſtances, though Franklin ſeems not to have perceived their influence, may yet be found in that candid narrative of his life, which he has left for the inſtruction of poſterity.

The firſt obſervation that will occur on peruſing this narrative, is, that his earlieſt youth betrayed an unſettled and adventurous ſpirit, which was perhaps a neceſſary qualification in the man, who ſhould riſe from an humble ſtation to the philoſophical and political eminence of Franklin. The ſtrong inclination which he felt for a ſea-faring life, was but the irregular emanation of his ardent mind; and was relinquiſhed, when his love of enterprize had been in ſome degree gratified by his flight to New-York. If we now conſider the kind of domeſtic education which he received, we ſhall be able to explain the origin of his infidelity.

A mind, ſuch as I have deſcribed, impetuous and volatile, required, to correct its extravagancies, the niceſt guidance of parental wiſdom. But the fa-

ther of Franklin was ill adapted to the taſk. He is indeed deſcribed by his ſon as a man of ſound underſtanding and ſolid judgment in matters of prudence both in public and private life; but he alſo appears to have been a man of auſtere virtue, and of habits almoſt puritanical. The unaccommodating ſeverity of ſuch a character was not likely to fix the unſteady youth of Franklin. Inſiſting peremptorily on his punctual attendance on public worſhip, he taught him to conſider abſence from it as an eſcape; preſenting to his mind eager for knowledge only books of controverſial divinity, while, by the rigour of his diſcipline, he alienated his ſon from the practice of religious duties, by the ſubjects on which he exerciſed his underſtanding, he produced no other effect than a ſpirit of argumentation, which, on meeting with ſome Deiſtical writings, induced him to doubt and reject the doctrines of religion. This ſpirit of argumentation experience and good ſenſe afterwards taught him to reſtrain and ſubdue; but the irreligious impreſſions which it had made on the levity of his youth, unhappily remained.

If we review the hiſtory of the moral character of Franklin, this account of the origin of his infidelity will be confirmed; for it will appear, that he had received from this injudicious education few diſtinct principles of moral conduct, but formed them for himſelf from the various occurrences of life.

At a very early period of his life he acknowledges that he had behaved diſhonourably to his brother in violating a ſecret contract of partnerſhip, which from political apprehenſions he knew his brother could not venture to produce The levity with which he ſpeaks of the infidelity of one of his intimate companions, proves that he was not actuated by that ſerious regard even for natural religion, which would have induced him to treat with reſpect thoſe ſcriptures, which muſt be admitted to have ſtrongly inculcated every natural duty; and he has himſelf admitted, in the relation of a ſhameful attempt to form an intrigue, that he had at that time no ties of religion. I ſhall conclude this unpleaſant recapitulation of the faults of a great character, with his neglect of a lady, whoſe affections he had engaged; and with obſerving that he himſelf accounts for his generoſity in poverty on a principle of vanity. Theſe obſervations collected from his own narrative, ſeem ſufficient to evince, that at the commencement of his career, his mind was not furniſhed with any ſettled rules of duty. He has, in like manner, enabled us to perceive the manner in which his active underſtanding formed principles of action for itſelf, though unhappily no circumſtance occurred which was able to direct his attention to revealed religion. The ſevere and tyrannical behaviour of his brother contributed, he obſerves, to imprint on his mind an averſion to arbitrary power; and the ill treatment, which he had experienced from his infidel companions, together with a recollection of the errors of his own conduct, at laſt convinced him, that ſome error muſt have imperceptibly

imperceptibly glided into his arguments; and "that truth, probity, and "ſincerity, in tranſactions between man and man, were of the utmoſt impor- "tance to the happineſs of life."

It is natural to inquire what was there in the character or ſituation of Franklin, which prevented thoſe impreſſions of moral duty from being matured to a feeling of religious obligation. This unhappy deficiency may, I believe, be ſufficiently accounted for by a circumſtance in his character, which the events of his life were fitted rather to encourage than to repreſs. In every period of his life, vanity appears to have had a predominant influence over his mind. In his youth, he thinks it likely, that his manners had too much of impertinence, not to afford a natural pretext for the ſeverity of his brother; and in his age he aſſigns the indulgence of his vanity as one motive for committing to writing the hiſtory of his life, Such a diſpoſition, cheriſhed by proſperity and reputation, was not ſuited to that humility, which, rejecting the pride of human wiſdom, looks up to the Almighty for aſſiſtance and inſtruction.

The intereſting narrative, which I have thus preſumed to analyze, may furniſh much uſeful reflection. Parents may learn, with what attention they ſhould ſtudy the characters of their children, when they ſee the miſchievous effects of the unſeaſonable auſterity of Franklin's education; and with what vigilance they ſhould ſeize every opportunity of inſtilling juſt principles of conduct, when they ſee the errors into which, from a deficiency of moral inſtruction, ſuch a mind as his could fall: and all may learn from his example, the jealouſy with which they ſhould ſcrutinize the diſpoſitions of their own hearts, when they ſee that all the political firmneſs, and all the philoſophic genius of a Franklin could not preſerve him from the ſeductions of vanity.

E.

DUBLIN:
Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.
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[A Letter Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER LX.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22, 1796.

Aut insanit homo, aut versus facit.

HORACE.

Is this poetry or madness?

SOME days ago, my Publisher brought me a pacquet containing the following letter: a tall meagre man, he said, in a very shabby suit of black, had left it at his shop, with a strict injunction that it should be delivered carefully into my own hands. My Publisher added, that the Gentleman had been very troublesome in tossing over his books and keeping his young men employed in attending him, and hinted his hope that I would not give him any encouragement to call again.

TO THE FLAPPER.

SIR,

I am by profession a Poet, and one of those, I confess, to whom that profession has not procured any great degree either of profit or reputation: I know however that the world is envious---some very great Poets have been very poor men, and after all, posthumous fame is the most valuable, as being least liable to the influence of prejudice or partiality. These are truths which have been exemplified in the lives of many of the most distinguished of my predecessors: and yet, Sir, experience has taught me, that poverty may be enjoyed to an excess bordering on inconvenience; and although nothing less than immortal celebrity will gratify my ambition, I must own that I should be well content to receive a little present emolument, by way of earnest. I cannot doubt that all my wishes on this head would be fully satisfied, could I but procure an introduction to the world under such respectable patronage as yours.---Nor should you find me ungrateful---you should have an unlimited credit upon me for any article in my way, to piece out a scanty Flapper, and save you from the reproach of wide lines---and I will undertake besides to give you poetic translations of all your latin mottoes, if you will only send me their literal English.

My pretensions to your favour will best appear from the specimens of my talents which I mean to lay before you; it is not necessary to detail the particulars of my life, but one or two circumstances may possibly tend to confirm your good opinion of me. One of the ancient writers, I am told, has a saying which signifies "that a poet is born and not made," that is, that the qualifications of a true poet must be the gift of nature and cannot be acquired by art. If this be true, I am a Poet by birth-right. Doctor Johnson is celebrated by Mrs Hester Lynch Piozzi for having composed a single stanza at three years of age: if I can depend on the veracity of my Nurse (very good authority in such a case) my infancy was distinguished by many similar prognostics---but, my genius, although it acknowledged no other pa-

rent than nature, did not disdain the nurture of art: it derived great benefit from the use of the Spelling-book, when whole columns of words arranged in rythmical order and chiming most poetically together, furnished materials for exercise 'till then unknown. But it was not untill a fortunate chance threw in my way *The Art of Poetry* by Mr. *Byshe* that I learned how much genius may be indebted to industry---What endless obligations have his labours imposed on us! a thousand times have I experienced the aid of this great midwife to the Muses, when my brain has been teeming with its literary offspring---Yes, Sir---Many a glowing idea would have cooled, many a kindling train of thought have been broken, many a sick conception been lost for ever to the world, had he not afforded the means of fixing and *corporealizing* the volatile spirit and marshalling it in metrical array---Yes, Sir---candour obliges me to confess that I have found nothing in Horace (at least in the translations that I have read) of such utility to the practitioner in the *Art of Poetry*, as Mr. *Byshe's* invaluable *Dictionary of Rhymes*.

Without further delay, I proceed to the developement of my volume. Poetry, like every thing else, is subject to the capricious influence of fashion; and, as it is the duty of those who write for the amusement and instruction of the public, I have attentively watched the changes and fluctu tions of taste in order to qualify myself for its service.---I have observed that very few works of length, in our line, will go down. Poetry cannot, as formerly, be served up, in thick tomes with close lines and narrow margins: our literary stomach, more delicate than that of our sturdy ancestors, kicks against a meal so gross. Whoever would have his verses relished, must be satisfied to offer them merely as sauce or seasoning to the more favourite dishes, such as Newspapers, Romances and Magazines. That this secures a greater number of readers at least is certain---many nice volumes, decorated as they are with all the elegance of modern typography, lie long on our Booksellers' shelves---nobody, buys poetry, except Nabobs and Snuffmen---every body buys Newspapers and Novels.---The gravest Politician will sometimes be driven to such consolation in the *Poets' Corner*, for the perverse continuance of a westerly wind, and snatch, in a Sonnet or an Epigram, a momentary oblivion of public calamities: and a young Miss, who would shrink almost equally from a volume of Poems and Sermons, may be tempted to peruse a tale or a ballad that comes powerfully recommended by some favourite Novel writer. These considerations have induced me to lay aside for the present, my Heroic Poem on Football and my Allegory after the manner of Spencer on the banishment of venemous creatures by St. Patrick, and to apply myself diligently to prepare an extensive assortment I have now on hands, and hope for your kind assistance in the disposal of them.

Of that Poetry which is adapted to *Newspapers or Magazines*, the *Sonnet* seems at present the most popular. I need not tell you, Sir, that the *Sonnet* is a Poem consisting of neither more nor less than fourteen lines: it is always supposed to be written by a Lady, and is usually in the tender, the amorous, or the melancholy vein: the fair Author, being in love or in the vapours, unbosoms herself to the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, or an ancient tree, or a winding stream, or so forth. As for example:

To the FULL MOON.

Queen of the Silver bow—within thy sphere
What form so grim is that which I descry?
That frowzy furze-bush prickling at his rear—
Queen of the Silver bow—oh tell me why—

Hast

Haſt thou reſign'd, by Cupid's wiles poſſeſt,
The ſpotleſs virgin ſtate thou heldſt ſo long—
To bear a conquering lover on thy breaſt,
And all the ſky with infant moons to throng?
Ah! no—I know thee hoſtile to the boy—
I know thou lov'ſt to quench his flaming dart:
And *him* with Furze-buſh oft thou doſt employ
To ſweep lovers very embers from the heart—
Come then, all thorny as thou art, kind buſh,
And from my breaſt the faithleſs Strephon bruſh.

The *Impromptu* is another ſpecies of Poetry well fitted for Newſpaper circulation. And as the former is uſually ſuppoſed to be the compoſition of a Lady, ſo this ſeems to belong peculiarly to the Gentleman, muſt be very ſhort and may either be gallant or ſatyrical. Of the former deſcription take one of a great variety which I have ready for uſe.

IMPROMPTU

On ſeeing a very bright Star.

Behold yon twinkling Star with chearing ray,
That lights the wand'ring Traveller on his way.
Thy peerleſs eye, my Fair, how like I view!
It chears, it lights, and—Ah! it twinkles too.

Poetry for a novel or romance admits of greater length: it may be ſucceſsfully introduced in the form either of a ſong, a fragment or a ſtory---and as ſurprize always heightens the effect, a judicious writer will place it exactly where the reader would leaſt have expected it---as for inſtance, when he has led his hero at midnight to the window of his miſtreſs, and the leaſt noiſe might fruſtrate his deſign by awaking a teſty father or jealous gouvernante, the lover is very properly made to chaunt forth a few ſtanzas in a clear tone, and if accompanied by the lute, ſo much the better---Some of our Comic Opera writers by the way, have improved on this idea, by making the heroine, in ſimilar circumſtances, join her inamorato in a duet.---But I proceed to give a ſpecimen of *Poetry for a romance*, which in ſtyle, in metre and in ſubject, I can aſſure you is ſtrictly conformable to the moſt modern and moſt approved authorities: it may be introduced in any part of any romance; for it is by no means neceſſary that it ſhould be connected with what proceeds or follows it---

Fair ELINOR and the INDISCREET SEXTON.

Such a dame as fair Elinor never was known—
Rich, beauteous and noble alſo.
The larks they did ſing, and the morning ſun ſhone,
And ſhe roſe as ſhe heard the loud matin bell's tone,
And to ſhrive did fair Elinor go.

And onward ſhe walk'd 'till ſhe came to the ſtile,
When her limbs they grew weary and ſore.
So then did fair Elinor reſt for a while—
Then ſtraight-way ſhe roſe and walk'd forward a mile
'Till ſhe came unto the Chapel-door.

And all as ſhe travers'd the Chapel around
E'er the matin-bell ceas'd for to toll,
A ſight ſhe did ſee that her heart did aſtound—
A man's body ſhe 'ſpied lying dead on the ground—
'Twas a ſight that did ſicken her ſoul.

For

For this corſe it was horrid and hideous and grim,
All ghaſtly and naked it lay;
And down to its feet and up to its chin
" The worms they crept out and the worms they crept in."—
Right fat and well favour'd were they—

Then the Sexton he would have accoſted the maid—
But fair Elinor quick did begin—
" Oh! tell me, Sir Sexton, when that I am dead
" Muſt my tender limbs on the cold ground be laid,
" And worms eat this delicate ſkin?"

" Indeed, lady fair," then ſpoke he ſo grave,
" I've been Sexton for forty years paſt;
" And ne'er knew I lady or knight that's ſo brave
" That their beauty or valour from dying could ſave
" To this we muſt all come at laſt."—

Full more had he ſpake—but a terrible groan
Through the vaulted roof loudly did ſound.
Adown ſunk fair Elinor on the cold ſtone—
Her breath it is fled and her life it is gone—
And ſhe lies a dead corſe on the ground.

Now liſten ye, Churchmen, of ev'ry degree
When in aft-times this tale you may meet,
Be taught by this warning—attend unto me,
Nor e'er talk of *death* to a beauteous lady,
Or ſtraight ſhe'll drop dead at your feet—

Beſides what I have mentioned, I have ready for the uſe of the Theatre a large collection of ſongs, with choice nonſenſe choruſes---alſo rebuſes, charades and conundrums by the dozen or hundred---in ſhort, a capital ſtock of every article in my line.---Announce me to all whom it may concern, dear Mr. Flapper, and you will not only ſave me the expence of advertizing, but confer an honour that ſhall not be forgotten while memory holds her place with

HORATIO HAIRBRAIN,

A.

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The Flapper.

NUMBER LXI.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29, 1796.

I HAD very ſenſible pleaſure lately in receiving a letter from the reſpectable correſpondent, whoſe complaints of the miſconduct of his ſon in the militia, occupied one of the earlieſt of theſe publications. He informs me, that the young man was ſo ſtruck with ſhame at the ridiculous, yet juſt point of view in which his character was depicted, and filled with ſuch compunction for the anxiety which he had cauſed the good old gentleman to feel, that he ſoon after applied for leave to quit the army, and is now comfortably ſettled in buſineſs, in the neighbourhood of his father's reſidence. Indeed I ſhould have felt ſo proud of the ſervice which my office has enabled me to perform in this inſtance, as to have complied with my correſpondent's requeſt, by publiſhing his acknowledgments at full length, had not the ſubſequent part of his letter contained a hint, that his ſon's ſudden reſolution was partly cauſed by diſguſt at what he conſidered ſupercilious conduct in his brother officers; who, it ſeems, had not all diſcovered ſo warm a diſpoſition to cultivate an intimacy with him, as he conceived he had a right to expect. I am afraid, therefore, that I cannot juſtly allow myſelf much credit for this converſion, on the conſequences of which, however, I heartily congratulate both the old and the young gentleman.

The obſervation is too generally made to be diſputed, that the junior part of the military profeſſion in general, is more diſtinguiſhed for exterior than interior poliſh. It is true, no other deſcription of men can pretend to rival them in the eaſy diſplay of drawing-room accompliſhments, and in a fluent ſupply of that light ſort of talk, which is ſeldom unwelcome to the youthful of the other ſex, and which indeed ſeems to ſpring naturally from the very conſtitution of modern polite ſociety, in which to be ſilent and to be ſerious, are equally ſingular and equally ridiculous. But in the company of the well-informed and the judicious of either ſex, ſuch men rarely hold the ſame pre-eminence; and to one unacquainted with the topics upon which converſation in ſuch company will uſually turn, good ſenſe will point out the propriety as well as prudence of reſerve. But good ſenſe will not always prevail---nor will it be ſurpriſing, if youthful vanity and ſelf-importance ſhould at times wince under ſuch a mortifying conſciouſneſs of inferiority, and endeavour to maintain its conſequence by a miſplaced exertion of that ſpirit of domineering, which it may perhaps have acquired an habit of indulging elſewhere.

What I wiſh ſtrenuouſly to recommend, is a greater attention in parents to the early education of youths deſtined for the army, than is generally beſtowed. As no profeſſion is ſo much expoſed to the temptation of idleneſs, ſo ſurely none requires a deeper and more ſolid foundation of right principles: as there is no profeſſion which affords longer or more frequent intervals of leiſure, there is not any to which the attainment of every uſeful branch of knowledge, and every innocent ſource of amuſement is more peculiarly neceſſary. A mind left unfurniſhed of ſuch materials for employ-

ment by the criminal negligence of early culture, will be a torment to its unfortunate poſſeſſor, and will drive him by its cravings to ſeek relief in perpetual diſſipation.

Far be it from my intention to libel a moſt uſeful and moſt reſpectable body of men, by holding up the picture of an unhappy few amongſt them, as a juſt repreſentation of the many.---I ſhould be guilty of great injuſtice to many, even within my own knowledge, who, bringing into the profeſſion talents and virtue, have received from it a grace of manner, which that profeſſion is eminently qualified to beſtow, and which, like varniſh on a fine painting, ſerves to vivify as well as to preſerve the intrinſic endowments of the heart and underſtanding.

Such is Sempronius, one of the earlieſt, one of the deareſt of my friends. Accident rather than inclination made Sempronius a ſoldier. He was engaged in the courſe of education neceſſary for a learned profeſſion, when the unexpected death of a father, who was his ſole ſupport, and whoſe income died with him, left but a ſcanty proviſion for his family. Sempronius found that the moſt rigid management could not ſupport the unavoidable demands of a Collegiate life. With an alacrity therefore that ſcarce gave him time to feel regret, he quitted the favourite objects of his younger days, and accepted a commiſſion in the ------ regiment, which the intereſt of a near relation procured him. Soon afterwards he went abroad, and I had few opportunities of receiving any information concerning him except through the public prints, from which I learned from time to time that his attention to duty recommended him to his ſuperiors, and advanced him rapidly ; temperance and a good conſtitution preſerving him from the diſeaſes, which by proving fatal to many of his brother-officers, opened a way to his rapid promotion.

Soon after Sempronius quitted College, as he has ſince told me, he found that his new profeſſion was not ſo unfavourable to literary purſuits, as he had at firſt ſuppoſed. Stated periodical duties were expected of him, and to the due diſcharge of them he had only to direct towards another object the habits of academic regimen already acquired. Theſe performed, he found himſelf poſſeſſed of much leiſure, and more uncontrouled in the application of it than he had been before. He applied himſelf diligently to ſtudy ; and moſt of thoſe hours which many of his brethren employed in the decoration or the diſplay of their perſons, or in frivolous or pernicious amuſements, Sempronius devoted to the embelliſhment of his mind---Early inſtructed in religious principles, they were confirmed by the encreaſe of his good ſenſe in candid examination---he felt, as he has often expreſſed it to me, that a ſoldier above all men ſhould be the beſt prepared for an account, to which he is of all men moſt likely to receive a ſudden ſummons. What was Sempronius's opinion of the practiſe of duelling, I know not.---The profeſſional indignities to which an avowed diſapprobation of it might poſſibly have expoſed him, forbade my entering on the ſubject ; and his well known and often tried courage, will ever repreſs the attack of bullying ruffians on the one hand, and on the other, the elegant ſuavity of his manners render him incapable of giving juſt cauſe of offence.---But though he has fought no duels, he has prevented many ; and unexperienced as he may be in the practice of modern honour, he is looked up to as an acknowledged judge of its rules and ceremonies.---By the practice of that œconomy of which the army is ſaid to be the beſt ſchool, Sempronius had been able to further the advancement of his younger brothers and ſiſters.---The ſame management furniſhes him with the means of affording perpetual relief to the deſerving objects of it. There is not a private ſoldier in his regiment who does not love him, becauſe he knows his benevolence---not a delinquent who does not fear him,

becauſe

becauſe he knows his vigilance. His good example ſpreads its effect throughout his corps, and the youngeſt officer is emulous to render himſelf deſerving of his eſteem.---In ſhort, Sempronius proves that courage is cloſely allied to gentleneſs---that the duties of a good ſoldier and a good citizen are perfectly compatible---and that a ſincere and pious chriſtian may even be a very fine gentleman.

FASHIONABLE ŒCONOMICS.

To apply the elegant caprices and ſportive varieties of faſhion to purpoſes of national advantage and ſcientific promotion, is the favourite purſuit of

PEREGRINE PUFFMANN, *at the* TUN OF HEIDELBERG, *New Buildings Dame-Street*,

who begs leave to communicate to the amateurs of taſteful art, a diſcovery which he flatters himſelf will be found pregnant with the moſt real benefits: with this confidence, he takes leave to announce to the elegant world his

PATENT CLOAK-BAG CRAVAT.

This will be found inexpreſſibly uſeful to Gentlemen of the army, Lawyers on circuit or on a march, and to all who, for the indulgence of contemplation, or any other motive, may prefer travelling without an attendant---being ſo contrived as to contain an entire change of linen and a caſe of razors within the bulk of a faſhionable cravat, and may be worn, with the utmoſt ſatisfaction, inſtead of the uſual ſtuffing.

A.

TO THE FLAPPER.

Dear Mr. Flapper,

We are all ſo charmed with your ſweet delightful charming papers! While my mamma, who has no taſte, Mr. Flapper, is poring over common newſpapers every morning, and reading all the advertiſements from beginning to end, my ſiſter, my couſin and I, read your pleaſant letters and ſtories over and over again. My mamma is always ſcolding us about reading novels, you muſt know, and running down the preſent moſt becoming faſhion of our dreſs; and yeſterday, Mr. F. after a long lecture on her favourite ſubject, ſhe alarmed us all moſt dreadfully, by telling us with joy ſparkling in her eyes, that ſhe had juſt read in one of the Engliſh papers, that the modeſt dreſs of Queen Elizabeth's time, would, in all probability, ſoon come round again to be the faſhionable dreſs of the day. We were afraid to venture to aſk her what this dreſs was particularly, but from the way ſhe ſpoke of it, and the pleaſure ſhe ſhewed, we knew it muſt have been ſome horrid fright or other. But ſoon after, out we went to the circulating library, and Mr. Vellum was ſo obliging as to ſhew us a print of two women in that dreſs, which he had as a frontiſpiece to one of Shakeſpeare's plays. I'm ſure, Mr. Flapper, you are a gentleman of ſuch taſte, that you can't but agree with us in thinking it the moſt horrible, ſtiff, unbecoming, odious thing, a perſon ever ſet eyes on. Now we all join in one requeſt, which we hope of all things you will comply with. It is, that you will write a paper abuſing the dreſs of Queen Elizabeth's time, and you are ſuch a monſtrous favourite with the ladies,

ladies, Mr. Flapper, that I am ſure it will be the means of keeping it off from us for this winter. Do, my dear Sir, oblige

Your conſtant reader and admirer,

SOPHIA MODISH.

ANSWER.

I am much flattered by the approbation of Miſs Modiſh, her ſiſter and couſin, and am ſure they will be happy when I inform them, that I perceive no one ſymptom of the return of that dreſs they ſo much dread. Should it happen during the period of my literary exiſtence to become the rage, the ladies may be aſſured, that on their intimating to me, that they ſtill think it unbecoming and odious, I ſhall, with all expedition, lay before them and the public a letter on the ſubject, long as their robes and light as---their feathers.

*** The Flapper has received a very long and very angry letter from Mr. Horatio Hairbrain; the Gentleman, whoſe productions appeared in his laſt publication. In anſwer he begs leave to aſſure Mr. Hairbrain, that the errors, which unfortunately occurred in the printing of that paper, are not to be attributed, as Mr. Hairbrain ſeems to ſuſpect, to any jealouſy felt by the Flapper towards him. As to the hints which Mr. Hairbrain throws out reſpecting Newgate, Parnaſſus, the Literati, the twelve Judges, Paſquin, the Dunciad, an Horſe-whip, and the like, the Flapper hopes no other anſwer will be neceſſary than the following, to which he begs the attention of his readers.

Page 2. line 2 for "when" read "where."
— 10 for "ſick" read "rich."
— 16 for "volume" read "ſcheme."
— 31 for "ſuch" read "ſeek."
Page 3. — 8 for "lovers" read "loves."
— 35 for "proceeds" read "precedes."

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[A Letter Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER LXII.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 1796.

IT is a curious fact that the *Novel*, a ſpecies of compoſition at this day ſo generally read, and ſo largely multiplied, ſhould have been unknown in the ancient world. Nothing bearing even the remoteſt reſemblance to it, has come down to the preſent times---nor can it be inferred from the records of antiquity which we ſtill poſſeſs, that any ſuch work was ever attempted, or even thought of, either by the Greeks or Romans.

It ſeems the more remarkable that this ſhould have been the caſe, conſidering how much both theſe nations were attached to the *Drama*. This, it might be ſuppoſed, would have almoſt neceſſarily ſuggeſted to them the idea of the *Novel*. They ſaw at once the connexion between *Tragedy* and the ſolemn Epick Poem, and in their writings on the ſubject, repreſented the one as little more than a modification of the other. Is it not ſtrange that they never ſhould have thought of modifying in a ſimilar manner, that branch of the drama which takes its ſubject from common life? Might not any well compoſed play which founds its plot upon the probabilities of domeſtic ſociety be, by a mere change of form, expanded into a novel, and on the other hand, would not a novel, by making the characters ſpeak for themſelves, and ſubſtituting action for deſcription, be reduced to a *Drama*?

Since, then, the tranſition from the *Drama* to the *Novel* ſeems ſo eaſy and ſo natural, may we not juſtly wonder, that the ancients ſhould have overlooked it, and have thus left ſo extenſive a field for the exerciſe of fancy, to be occupied for the firſt time by their remote ſucceſſors. We cannot attribute their omiſſion to want of genius. Their ſucceſs in ſo many various works of invention has fully evinced, that in mental talents they were fully equal to any who have come after them. We muſt, of courſe, aſcribe this particular deficiency to the circumſtances of the times, to ſomething in the ſtate of ſociety in Greece and in Rome, which produced an indiſpoſition for executing and perhaps for enjoying this ſpecies of compoſition.

Before the art of printing was diſcovered, literature in general laboured under diſcouragements which at firſt view might appear unſurmountable. We have, doubtleſs, abundant proofs that extraordinary genius was more than a match for the difficulties it had to contend with; and, we know too, that ſelf-flattering vanity found means, even then, to obtrude itſelf upon the world. It is nevertheleſs evident, that in thoſe circumſtances, ſuch lighter labour of the fancy as comes forth at this day to aſſiſt the gay and thoughtleſs

in getting over the dreary intervals of their pleaſures could ſcarcely have been attempted. Where the only mode of publication was by multiplying manuſcript copies, there was no motive to compoſe works which could entertain but for a day, which even now owe their brief duration to the cheap facility with which they may be circulated.

But this does not account ſufficiently for the abſolute non-exiſtence of novels. The Novel-writer does not always limit his view to the mere furniſhing paſtime to the idle and diſſipated. He ſometimes purſues a nobler deſign, and both aims at and attains to claſſick excellence. He produces a work in which the moſt intereſting characters of human nature are delineated with pertneſs, with ſtrength, with animation. He executes an *Epopee* of common life as perfect in its way as the heroic Epopee of an Homer or a Virgil, and perhaps even gives a more extended gratification than the ſublimeſt epick poet has been able to afford.

The queſtion then is, why ſhould there not have been ſome few performances of this kind in the ancient world? Why ſhould there not have been a *Fielding* as well as a *Virgil?* And though we ſhould allow that a *Tom Jones* or an *Amelia* would have ſunk before the majeſty of the Æneid, is there any reaſon why they ſhould not have ranked much higher in the general ſcale of literature than the *Pharſalia* of *Lucan*, or the *Thebaid* of *Statius?*

I have already hinted, that the non-exiſtence of *Novels* may moſt naturally be attributed to the circumſtances of ſociety in the ancient world. Let us purſue this thought, and perhaps we ſhall diſcover, that in the times which I am ſpeaking of, the production of ſuch works was next to impoſſible. It is obvious that in order to form an intereſting novel, the delicacy of affection muſt be pourtrayed as well as the violence of paſſion; the more dignified as well as the meaner tendencies of our nature muſt be developed, and the deep ſhades of vice with which a painter from real life is obliged to charge his canvaſs, muſt be illumined by the brilliancy of virtue. The noveliſt muſt of courſe collect ſketches for his work from amongſt the moſt refined, and tender combinations of ſociety, and to this end he will moſt naturally turn his view to the intercourſe between the ſexes He will probably chuſe for his favourite ſubject, the progreſs and varied operations of a pure and virtuous attachment, which the occurrence of difficulties renders eventful, and which in its myſterious courſe, puts into motion every ſecret ſpring of human nature,--every power of the mind, and every temper of the ſoul. Or if he be rather led to unfold the elaborate artifices of the baſe ſeducer, he will diverſify the ſhocking tale by diſplaying the artleſs innocence, the unſuſpecting confidence, the virtuous indignation of the injured victim.

Without ſuch enrichments what could the noveliſt attain to? Or would it be poſſible to produce ſuch a work at all, if the tenderneſs of virtuous love, and the charm of female excellence were to be excluded? What for inſtance would be the merit of Fielding's *Tom Jones*, if he had confined himſelf to detailing the intrigues of his hero, without the mixture of a nobler paſſion, or

the

the introduction of the amiable *Sophia*? What ſatisfaction could we have received from the whimſical weakneſſes of *Booth*, or the ſeductive art of Miſs Matthews, if the wiſe and gentle Amelia had been abſent? Or could *Richardſon* have engaged us by all the wit and talents of the vicious Lovelace, if he had not given intereſt to his work by the majeſtic virtue of Clariſſa?

But ſuch characters could not be introduced into a work profeſſing to be a picture of common life when nothing like them exiſted in Society. That eaſy and unreſtrained intercourſe between the ſexes, which in later times has ſo eſſentially contributed to the improvement and happineſs of our nature, and which alone leaves room either for the riſe or progreſs of genuine and delicate affection, could not be repreſented with any probability where no ſuch intercourſe was known. Nor could female excellence be made the embelliſhment even of a work of fancy where it was not permitted to adorn real life, ---where, in ſhort, the whole ſex was degraded, and abuſed into worthleſſneſs.

On this ground alone then, it was abſolutely impoſſible that any work like our modern novel ſhould have been compoſed in ancient *Greece*. *Athens* was its literary metropolis and the ſtate of Society at Athens even at its higheſt pitch of refinement appears to have been as completely excluſive of all pure regard and of all rational intercourſe between the ſexes as it is at this day in Turkey. "The Athenian women," ſaith the Abbe *Barthelemi*, "ſhut up in "their apartments are excluded from participating and augmenting the plea- "ſure of thoſe aſſemblies which are formed by their huſbands---a wife is "deſtined ſolely to ſuperintend the interior of the houſe, and to perpetuate "the name of a family by giving children to the Republic."

The moral habits of both ſexes were preciſely what might have been expected from ſo unnatural a conduct: "the women of Athens," ſaith the ſame accurate author, "removed from public affairs by the conſtitution of the "country, and impelled to voluptuouſneſs by the very ſoftneſs of the air "which they breathe, have no ambition but to attract lovers, no care but "about their dreſs, and no other virtue but the dread of infamy; and the "men, he adds, whether young or advanced in life, whether magiſtrates or "philoſophers, all in ſhort who have a competent revenue, beſtow their whole "regard on miſtreſſes whom they keep, with whom they ſpend part of every "day, and by whom ſometimes they have children whom they confound "with their legitimate offſpring."

It is needleſs to adduce further proof that in ſuch a ſtate of things there could neither be domeſtic virtue nor happineſs, and that it was of courſe impoſſible even for the pencil of fancy to draw an intereſting picture of common life. Where there was no tribute of reſpectful tenderneſs from the one ſex---no return of grateful affection from the other, the noveliſt could have found no fit materials for his work, nor, if with a prophetic foreſight he could have anticipated the habits and cuſtoms of happier times, would it have been poſſible for him to have been either reliſhed or underſtood.

What

What could not have been executed at Athens it would have been vain to expect from the imitating genius of Rome. We have no ſhadow of reaſon to think that all the united powers of the Auguſtan age would have been equal to produce a new ſpecies of compoſition, had even the manners of the period been favourable to ſuch an attempt. But what ground have we to ſuppoſe that the private life of the Romans was either more delicate or more happy than that of the Athenians? They were perhaps leſs voluptuous becauſe they had but lately emerged from barbariſm. But they were ſcarcely more virtuous and certainly not more refined. The attention which they paid to the ſofter ſex from choice appears to have been ſenſual and licentious, the ties which they formed for convenience or from policy were not ſtrengthened by any laſting principle, ſince they were every now and then diſſolved by caprice. Even *Cicero* after being married many years to a woman whoſe worth he himſelf has recorded, repudiated her that he might eſpouſe the youthful *Publilia*. Nor could the virtues of *Tullia*, his own beloved and lamented daughter ſecure her from being divorced by her huſband *Dollabella*. If genuine conjugal love and the happineſs to which it leads, exiſted at all, the inſtances ſeem to have been too few to excite attention, much leſs could they have given a new direction to genius or taſte. And even thoſe few inſtances were ſpeedily, it may be feared, ſwallowed up in the worſe than Grecian debauchery which marked the Roman manners in the laſt period of the Empire.

The novel then on the whole, is a ſpecies of compoſition of which the manners of the ancient world could not have ſuggeſted even an idea. It is the offspring of fancy---but then only when impregnated with the images of genuine domeſtic happineſs, of real gallantry and of chaſte affection. Let it be obſerved, that in ſpeaking of the *Novel* I mean only that claſs which taſte and virtue muſt agree in approving; and of ſuch I need not heſitate to ſay, that if we have at this day a new mean of innocent and uſeful amuſement for our leiſure hours, which the ancient neither did nor could poſſeſs, we owe this to that advanced civilization which neither arts nor philoſophy could give to Greece; which Rome, even when miſtreſs of the world, did not attain, but which has diſtinguiſhed and dignified CHRISTIANITY and *Europe*.

L.

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The Flapper.

NUMBER LXIII.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 1796.

Ρῆμα παρὰ καιρὸν ῥηθὲν ανατρεπει βιον.

ANONYMOUS.

IT has long been inculcated by thoſe who have aſſumed the province of preſcribing rules for the conduct of life, "that little things become important from the frequency with which they recur." The inattention of mankind will probably always make it neceſſary for the moraliſt to recall this truth to his recollection. Every man is ready to acknowledge, that what he is every day obliged to perform, it is eſſential to his eaſe and happineſs that he perform well; but, as the ſum of thoſe evils which reſult from ſucceſſive miſcarriages in little things, can never preſs on him at one time, he is apt to think lightly of the inconvenience which he may ſuffer, from failure in ſingle inſtances.

Of thoſe things in which we ſhould ſtudy to excell, becauſe we muſt frequently engage in them, converſation is, perhaps, the moſt important. Our ſkill or ignorance in this act, emerges daily into view, and becomes to others as well as ourſelves a ſource of pleaſure the moſt refined, or pain the moſt exquiſite: It is a ſoil, indeed, which, with proper culture, produces fruits and flowers, but from which, when neglected, ſpring weeds and poiſon: a medium through which learning flows, wit ſparkles, and friendſhip communicates it's kindeſt influence. That men ſhould be heedleſs of excellence in that, in which excellence is ſo important, could ſcarcely be credited, did not experience vouch the fact. Every company into which one enters, affords inſtances of this, by which we are equally ſurprized and pained: for in every company one may obſerve the feelings of the mild mortified, and the paſſions of the proud excited by a violence of rules ſo ſimple, that they ſeem to be among the moſt obvious dictates of plain ſenſe. Either time is waſted in the deciſion of trivial topics, or ſuch topics are choſen as cannot fail to rouſe the leaſt amiable paſſions of the human heart. It is indeed in the choice of topics, that the great error ſeems to be committed; and he who could prevent error in this inſtance, would deſerve to be ranked among the beſt benefactors of human life.

It is not, perhaps, in this degenerate ſtate of the world, to be hoped, that in large companies, thoſe topics only ſhould be choſen for converſation which are moſt likely to promote the intereſts of truth and virtue. As little is it to be expected that the ſubjects of ordinary diſcourſe ſhould be drawn from the arts and ſciences, or that the end of every converſation ſhould be to forward the improvements of ſociety, or add to the embelliſhments of life: But it might not unreaſonably be expected, that men aſſociating together for the purpoſes of ſocial happineſs, ſhould diſcuſs thoſe topics only by which ſocial happineſs was likely to be encreaſed.

It were vain to attempt to direct taſte in the ſelection of topics for converſation---they are different as are the tempers which ſucceſſively influence the mind, and various as thoſe ſources in nature and in morals from which the moral and philoſophic mind may draw benefit and pleaſure. It is more practicable to point out thoſe which in mixed companies it is injudicious to

diſcuſs, and among thoſe I heſitate not to ſay that Politics are the moſt ineligible. They are, indeed, that ſubject from agitating which the leaſt benefit can be hoped, and the moſt miſchief may be dreaded. Argument it is to be feared, when perſonally carried on, ſeldom leads to truth; much more frequently does it influence rancour and confirm error---even when the ſubject of debate is an abſtract queſtion in the deciſion of which the mind cannot be ſuppoſed to feel a ſtronger biaſs toward one ſide than the other. How much more miſchief is to be apprehended from diſputes on queſtions connected, as political queſtions generally are, with the conduct of life, and in which an error in theory muſt be productive of erroneous practiſe?---On ſuch queſtions a diſpute cannot be carried on without violence, or a deciſion made without implanting in the mind the ſeeds of rankling animoſity---for who would quietly admit that he holds opinions inconſiſtent with the duties of a good citizen, or principles that go to ſanction tyranny or to diſturb public peace?

The end of all reaſoning ſhould be to aſcertain truth or to detect error: neither of theſe ends is likely to be attained by political diſcuſſions in mixed companies. Were thoſe who engage in theſe diſputes influenced by the love of truth merely, yet their diſcuſſions would in many inſtances, be fruſtrated by the extent of the ſubject which an evening would be too ſhort to diſcuſs, and, in more, by the impoſſibility of adducing theſe proofs on which the queſtion muſt reſt: But excluſive of thoſe impediments to the inveſtigation of political truth, there is another ſtill more difficult to overcome---want of ſincerity in the diſputants. In the exiſting ſtate of things, almoſt every man is impelled by motives diſtinct from the weight of argument, to adopt and ſupport ſome one ſide of every political queſtion with more zeal than the abſtract evidence in its favour would warrant. Eſtabliſhed Governments muſt have a widely extended influence, and thoſe who are not drawn within its vortex are repelled by an oppoſite principle with as much force, and in a direction perhaps as different from that in which truth is to be met with---as in phyſics the body which is placed beyond the ſphere of attraction is driven off by a repulſive power. Who that conſiders how much private intereſt, the connections of friendſhip, of blood, or of affinity, influence the will and warp the judgment of mankind; how much jealouſy of a rival's power, or envy at a competitor's ſucceſs, biaſſes opinion againſt truth; would reaſon with a man on ſubjects where argument would have ſuch opponents? Yet ſuch generally are political ſubjects.

If it be a true principle that no ſubject ſhould be diſcuſſed in company, which was abſtract or difficult, politics undoubtedly ſhould be excluded, for no ſubject ſurely is connected with ſo great a number of abſtract propoſitions as the ſcience of Government. Shallow minds in which ignorance and vanity are always commenſurate, venture on the diſcuſſion of them with confidence, but he whoſe mind is ſufficiently comprehenſive to take in the whole of the ſubject, knows the difficulty and avoids it. Thoſe will reaſon on an iſolated fact and peremptorily decide on its merits without knowing the ſyſtem of which it is part, or the circumſtances by which it is accompanied: the other will be cautious not to venture an opinion where he has not *data* to direct it, and will be ſilent becauſe he ſees the proportion of his knowledge to his ignorance.

But political diſcuſſions, it has been ſaid, ſhould be promoted in a free ſtate, becauſe they are the beſt preſervatives of its freedom. That in a free ſtate the ſubject has a right to declare his opinion of public meaſures, and to commend or cenſure as he believes them to be beneficial or miſchievous, cannot be denied; and, that it is the duty of a free ſubject to guard againſt the encroachments of power, and lift up his voice againſt them, when they threaten

threaten liberty, is equally true: but, let it be remembered, that this is a public duty, which, to be properly performed, muſt be performed in public: nor are the ſacred receſſes of hoſpitality to be wantonly expoſed to clamorous debates on miniſterial meaſures, the rights of man, or the advantages of monarchy. With reſpect to the efficacy of private diſcuſſion in preſerving public freedom, there is reaſon to believe, that more is attributed to it than it deſerves. The bablings of ignorance cannot ſecure wiſdom to the public councils; nor is it to be believed, that the acrimonious diſputes of private men, can tend beneficially to influence the councils of the nation. No good can reſult from diſcuſſions originating in folly, and proſecuted with contentious dogmatizing: The freedom of the ſtate will be beſt preſerved by the wiſdom, the virtue, and the ſpirit of its citizens, but there is neither wiſdom, nor virtue, nor ſpirit, in violating the peaceful politeneſs of private life, by vociferous diſputes or inflammatory topics.

If the public conduct of men can be influenced at all by the contentious diſputes of the table, it is more likely that evil than good will reſult from them. The man who comes to act in public with his mind heated by the irritation of diſpute, will probably be carried by the principle he has defended, farther than, perhaps, it would naturally have led him. Hence ariſe thoſe intemperate meaſures which are ſo often urged or adopted in times when the ſpirit of party runs high: and hence, too, thoſe deadly feuds between political enemies which ſometimes are not extinguiſhed, 'till their blood has been transfuſed through ſucceſſive generations.

It is generally true that thoſe men who are beſt able to ſupport their own opinions, or refute thoſe of others, are the leaſt prompt to exert this ability in private ſociety. Of this the lamented and beloved Huſſey Burgh was an illuſtrious inſtance. Though himſelf the leader of a party in contentious times, and as ſuch frequently obliged to mingle in what may be called political ſociety, never was it known that Burgh marred the pleaſures of the circle in which he mixed, that he made an enemy or loſt a friend by the warmth or acerbity of political diſpute. Wherever *he* came, *there* was good humour, though the buſineſs of the evening might have been to agitate a party queſtion, to diſcuſs different opinions, or determine the beſt among controverted meaſures. Perhaps it required a ſoul like that of Burgh to reach this high degree of temperance on ſubjects which ſo ſtrongly prompt to ſelf-diſplay; but though ordinary minds muſt in this as in other inſtances, follow at an humble diſtance, it may yet be reaſonably expected, that if ſuch topics cannot be altogether avoided, they may be diſcuſſed at leaſt with forbearance and temper; and, that if we cannot perſuade others to adopt our ſentiments, we ſhould ſtill treat the opinions of others with that indulgence and reſpect, which politeneſs, good ſenſe, and I will add, chriſtianity require.

I have in this paper contented myſelf with pointing out the inconveniencies of obtruding into private company political diſputes: It is not however meant, that this is the only error in converſation which calls for admonition: there are indeed many others, which will readily occur to the mind of every one who has been much converſant in the world, and which may perhaps furniſh matter for a future FLAPPER.

K.

TO THE FLAPPER.

SIR,

It is long ſince my couſin, and your correſpondent, Horatio Hairbrain, favoured me with a copy of the ballad inſerted in one of your late numbers: As the concluſion of it differs a little from that in my poſſeſſion, I preſume ſuch

ſuch variation may have eſcaped my couſin's memory : and I, therefore, take the liberty of ſending it unto you, as it appears in my copy ; ſeeming more conſonant unto the wonderful events of ſuch like modernly ancient compoſitions. Inſtead, therefore, of the laſt three ſtanzas of your edition, I would propoſe reading the ſubſequent five. I am certain, Mr. Flapper, you and your taſteful readers, will obſerve the very beautiful alliteration purſued in many lines of this additional part ; and alſo the pious and familiar wiſh with which the ſtory concludes, together with the uſeful moral advice which crowns the work. I am, Sir,

Your very humble ſervant,

BENJAMIN BRAINLESS.

" Fair lady, this body which breathleſs you view,"
Says the Sexton, " " tho' lowly it lies,
" Was once a bold knight, who made warm love to you,
" And who for that daring preſumption I ſlew,
" For I am a knight in diſguiſe.

" In your father's fine hall your fair form I admir'd,
" Another gueſt gained your good grace ;
" With paſſion ſore ſtung, and by jealouſy fir'd,
" I fought him, and kill'd him, and when he expir'd,
" I brought him to this holy place."

" Sir ſexton," ſaid ſhe, " the tale well I know,
" It rankles full ſore in my mind,
" My nights it embitter'd with ſorrow and woe,
" But now I have met you, with you I will go,
" Full glad a brave lover to find."

Then off went the lady, and off went the knight,
Right merry was he and was ſhe.
The prieſt join'd their hands the very ſame night,
And if they were not happy in joy and delight,
I hope you and I ſo may be.

Then liſten, ye ſextons of ev'ry degree,
Where e'er this my tale ſhall be read,
Let no lovely lady her dead lover ſee,
Or elſe ſhe confounded and grieved may be,
Without getting a new in his ſtead.

*** The Flapper requeſts his readers will take the trouble of correcting the following miſtakes in his laſt paper, and hopes they will excuſe the inadvertence which occaſioned them.

Page 1, line *laſt*, for " labour comes," read " labors come."
2, — 11, for " pertneſs," read " juſtneſs."
4, — 2, for " imitating," read " imitative."
–, — *laſt*, for " CHRISTIANITY and," read " CHRISTIANIZED."

DUBLIN:
Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.
[Price, Two Pence.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER LXIV.

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 19, 1796.

TO THE FLAPPER.

MR. FLAPPER,

IT was my lot to have been bred up to a line of buſineſs which has confined me cloſely to the metropolis. My family had conſtantly reſided in the city, and until this preſent year—the thirty-ſixth of my age—I knew no more of the country, of its ſociety and its employments, than what I could pick up in a Sunday's ride to *Leixlip*, or an annual viſit of the club in our ſtreet to the *Dargle* or *Waterfall*. But this laſt ſummer I determined on bidding adieu to buſineſs for a ſhort time, and anxious to ſee the new world, I accepted of an invitation which I had often declined before, from a near relation who lives in a weſtern county at a conſiderable diſtance.

My couſin, *Squire Ringwood*, never came up to *Dublin*, ſo that, though his general character was rather that of a foxhunter, I pleaſed myſelf with the notion of gratifying his curioſity by communicating to him town information and anecdotes, in return for what I ſhould learn from him of rural manners, while we ſhould jointly partake of the innocent and ſimple pleaſures of the country. I knew that he kept a bachelor's houſe, and that his whole family conſiſted only of himſelf and *Captain Stickfaſt*, who about fifteen years ago had, while a lieutenant in a marching regiment then quartered in the neighbourhood, married an ancient maiden lady, the ſquire's ſiſter. The captain having ſold out immediately, ſettled in the houſe of his brother-in-law. The lady has been many years dead. To make a proper figure in the country, I got a ſkilful friend to purchaſe for me a pair of right good hunters, and an excellent double-barrelled gun. I brought down alſo ſome choice flints, a bottle of ſnuff, a caſe of fiſhing-tackle, and a new book on gardening, as preſents to my couſin.

I will not tell you, Mr. *Flapper*, how many little inconveniencies muſt have occurred on the road to a perſon not uſed to travel. I was in haſte—and probably ſo are you—to find me at my journey's end. On the evening of the third day I reached *Ringwood Hall*, having with ſome nicety kept clear of a bog between the houſe and road, and with ſome reſolution plunged through a ſort of wide-ſpread dunghill-yard about the offices. The houſe appeared to be an extenſive old-faſhioned manſion; rich furniture one does not expect ſo far from town, but neatneſs at the outſide, and convenience at the inſide, I flattered myſelf I ſhould find. In this I was diſappointed—my couſin told me he could keep a good table at half the coſt of a good houſe, and that a warm reception was better than a warm room. The ſtate bed-chamber was laid out for me, the dampneſs of which I did not perceive until after my night's ſleep. I can't ſay that my health ſuffered in the leaſt, my friend having recommended as his medical preſervative againſt cold and a ſtrange bed—an abundance of ſtrong punch—a preſcription he never failed to enforce during the whole of my ſtay.

Being fatigued by my journey, I ſlept 'till eight o'clock the next morning; when I haſtened down to apologize for my riſing ſo late, but was informed by one of the lower ſervants, who had juſt got up, that his maſter was never ſtirred 'till near ten ſince his fit of the gout, but that the Captain often

came down a little after nine. Not thinking it civil to go about the grounds 'till my hoſt ſhould accompany me, I had only to kick my heels in the ſitting parlour while the ſervants were cleaning it out, without being able to get a book to divert me, and without any proſpect from the windows except that of the barn and turf-ſtacks. Surely, Mr. Flapper, half the advantage and delight of the country is loſt to thoſe who do not riſe early in the morning to walk abroad and to enjoy it. When my couſin came down and that breakfaſt was over and dinner ordered, he took me over his farm. Pleaſure grounds he had none except his kitchen-garden, and I am not ſufficiently ſkilled in country buſineſs to ſay whether neatneſs in the dreſſing of land is compatible with profit in the cultivation of it. If the Squire is a good farmer, it certainly is not—perhaps the appearance of the citizens' villas near *Dublin* had biaſſed my mind on the ſubject.—There was certainly a great difference between them and *Ringwood-Hall.*

The mode of ſpending time here was not at all to my liking—but I recollected the old proverb, *when you are at Rome you muſt do as Rome does*, and having come down not to teach but to learn, I followed exactly the ways of the houſe. Theſe can eaſily be deſcribed, as the greateſt uniformity took place in the management and diſtribution of time. We roſe about ten o'clock and at eleven generally had breakfaſt finiſhed.—'Till near one he ſauntered about the hall-door, looked at the horſes—fired ſome ſhots with piſtols at a mark—bought fiſh—taught the young dogs to fetch and to lie down—lamented that we had got up too late to go to the famous caverns and waterfall twelve miles off, but determined to riſe early next day for the purpoſe. (N. B. Learned from the company who dined with us the day before I left the country, that the caverns were not worth ſeeing.) From about one to five—if the day was remarkably fine, which happened very rarely—on horſeback—collecting friends for dinner and laying wagers about horſes.—If weather not good—pools of backgammon. (N. B. My couſin very much afraid of going abroad in damp air, on account of his gout—does not think he plays backgammon well, but has ſurpriſing luck.) From five 'till near ten—at the table—dinner plentiful—drinking hard—large bumpers for your own toaſt—the croupier's and the ſquire's.—(How many toaſts the Squire can give!) difficult to avoid being fined—company never leſs than from ſix to eleven:—Swopping—handicap—ſporting your hand, &c. Ten o'clock *vingt-un* 'till twelve—ſupper—break up near two.

My couſin Ringwood's converſation I cannot ſay I found very entertaining, though he had the character of being the pleaſanteſt fellow in the world. The Gentlemen who dined with us every day ſwore that there was no one in the neighbourhood like him. He was indeed always in high ſpirits, but he ſwore a great deal, and indulged himſelf frequently in obſcenity which I got the title *quiz-major* for not appearing to approve. His converſation generally conſiſted of marvellous ſtories about his horſes, his dogs and himſelf, or of jeſts from *Joe Miller* told by him of names which we all know familiarly. As to his being a good humbugger, from what I ſaw, it ſeems to be the ſame as ſaying he is a great liar. I can ſee no great merit in writing a letter to inform a Gentleman that his uncle is at the point of death, and ſending him twenty miles to laugh at him for believing it. Sometimes indeed the Squire is made to pay dearly enough for his unlucky talent in practical joking. He loſt one of his moſt valuable friends ſome time ſince, by writing an offer of a compromiſe to a party with whom he was at law, in ſo good an imitation of his handwriting, that the Gentleman was very near being caſt by it in his ſuit: and he certainly will have on his hands next Aſſizes, when they meet in the Grand Jury Room, a duel with a Baronet, who lives in a ſorry cabbin at the other end of the county, in conſequence of his having ſet on an eminent architect to write to him for the ground plan and elevation of his *Chateau.*

The

The Squire's principles and conduct are not such as I can approve. Though a Magistrate, I know he encourages the unlicenced distillation of whiskey among his tenantry, and from hints which have dropped from himself, I apprehend he is connected in a contraband trade carried on along the coast contiguous to his house. Sunday seems to have no other mark of distinction than that the domestics are clean on that day. I have observed also about the house several children better dressed than the children of servants could be supposed; I made no enquiries about them, but I have had reason to entertain suspicions that Mrs. Betty the house-keeper was not a whit better than she should be. In respect to myself, though he treated me with the greatest hospitality, there was one act of his which I doubt not will appear to you, Mr. Flapper, who are probably no better jockey than I am, unhandsome, and perhaps unjust. I had been but a short time his guest when my horses underwent a most minute inspection—they had several faults—that which I prized most highly and had got for my own riding, was an old one, *bishopped up* for the market.—If he stood long in the stable without exercise, that horse's feet would go—and from the make of his shoulder the Squire swore, (and I had the Captain's testimony to support it) he must be a stumbler. An unsafe horse to a bad horseman is dreadful, and after blessing my stars for my escape on my three days' journey, (my horse indeed had not made a trip) I requested the Squire's assistance to accommodate me more safely, and got from him in exchange one which he could engage should not stumble, start, nor run away. And well he might, for I found out—too late for my returning him—that the horse could not see any thing to start at, and was so lazy that it was with much spurring he could be got forward at all. My friend's answer on expostulating with him was, that he would with great pleasure assist me in disposing of the horse, but that he had been obliged to make a rule never to take a horse back. Mine he acknowledged had not turned out as well as he expected, but I must recollect how far he had engaged him. I have since seen so much of the general mode of dealing in horses, that I do not condemn my cousin so severely as I did at first.—Nine-tenths of the Squires in the neighbourhood would have done the same thing.—But, pray, Mr. Flapper, what right have honest country Gentlemen to be cheats and swindlers and rogues in horse-flesh?

My stay at *Ringwood Hall* was shorter than I had at first designed. I meant to have staid two months, but in truth, Sir, I found I could but ill afford the expence of being a guest there for more than one. The dissipation too was greater than my habits or constitution would admit,—particularly after the race-week, which brought us much company from distant parts, and made the house a continued scene of gambling and riot. *Vingt-un* was then found slow, and methodical; *brag* took its place; and once or twice when we broke up too late after dinner for cards, a little *hazard*. These games, however, I constantly declined. I was shamed into joining in my turn at handicap, where the stake was low, and had the pleasure of many hearty laughs at the gentlemen who were sent home at night without coats or waistcoats. But I seldom stood to the award, which enabled me by one stroke of generalship to raise my character as a knowing one. On the day before my intended departure, (a matter which I had communicated only to the Captain, with whom I always consulted) early after dinner I challenged the squire's horse—that is, my horse that was—he challenged one that after many exchanges was then mine; he stood—to his great surprise I stood also—and twenty guineas boot paid down by me, put me again in possession of my horse. The company with loud laughs, enjoyed the trick I played the squire, who, indeed, to say the truth, bore the joke with great good humour. But elated with my success, I pushed my luck too far, for breaking my determination, I engaged with

with them that night at *brag*, and I much fear, that my loſs there was nearly as great as my profit in the bargain for the horſe.

The next morning I ſet out for Dublin, not without ſome apprehenſions at riding a horſe which I had been told muſt be a ſtumbler. I arrived however in courſe, without the ſmalleſt accident, fully ſatisfied, that my couſin, during the ſhort time he had poſſeſſion of the horſe, had cured him of all his faults. The account of profit and loſs I ſubjoin, Mr. *Flapper*, hoping that you may give a place to it with this letter, in your uſeful publication, for the benefit of *Dublin* traders, who may receive invitations from country friends. I am happy in finding myſelf cured of any premature deſires to quit buſineſs and return to the country. Rural ſports I do not much like,—I have not activity or boldneſs for hunting,—fiſhing is ſolitary—and, for the gun,—in a place which was ſaid to abound with game, I went out twice with the Captain, who was reckoned a moſt excellent ſportſman, without finding a bird. (By the bye the Captain took ſuch a liking to my double-barrelled gun, and admired the workmanſhip ſo often, that as he had been remarkably my friend, I thought I could do no leſs than preſent it to him.) But, as to rural manners—my opinion on the ſubject formed from poetical and romantic deſcriptions is now compleatly altered. I aſſure you, Mr. *Flapper*, I believe I had more ſimplicity than any of the gentlemen I met in the country. *Thomſon* certainly never lived in my couſin's ſociety, and *Cowper* certainly would have ſpoken differently had he ſpent a month at *Ringwood-Hall*.

I am, Mr. Flapper,
With much eſteem,
Your very humble ſervant,
ZACHARY URBAN.

Poſtſcript. I forgot to mention to you, that the day before I came away my couſin called me out ſuddenly to requeſt, as the Captain was not in the way, I would ſign my name with his to a bond for an hundred pounds, to an attorney who would not ſo much as wait 'till the half year's rents ſhould come in. Though I do not much like going ſecurity, I thought a refuſal would be very unhandſome. The ſquire ſaid he would ſend up a bond of indemnity, which, however, has not yet arrived. Though he might forget a trifling debt, yet I cannot think but that in a matter of conſequence, he would always act like a man of honour.

Account of outfit and expences of expedition to RINGWOOD HALL.

	£.	s.	d.
Small preſents for Squire Ringwood,	2	5	6
Piſtols brought down by his order,	17	1	3
Back-gammon,	4	13	8h
Vingt-un	6	15	5
Subſcription to races, ordinary balls, &c.	11	7	6
Loſs on exchange of horſes ſix times,	33	19	9
Handicap ſtakes loſt,	3	7	8h
Clothes, &c. loſt at ditto, taylor, &c.	3	19	7h
Own horſe won at ditto,	22	15	0
Preſents bought at auctions in neighbourhood,	2	16	10h
Brag	7	16	6
Double-barrelled gun,	28	8	9
Servants (according to liſt furniſhed by my man) viz. Butler, Groom, Steward, Houſekeeper,	5	13	9
Ditto, Laundry-maid, Cook, Houſe-maid, Helper, Dog-teacher, &c.	3	8	3
Total,	154	9	1
Profit of ſaid expedition,	154	9	1
Balance againſt *Ringwood Hall*,			

The Flapper.

NUMBER LXV.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1796.

THE FLAPPER is moſt happy, whenever his office enables him to ſerve any of his kind correſpondents. Mr. HAIRBRAIN, whoſe talents were announced to the public in a late paper, has already in conſequence of that introduction, received through my publiſher, the following propoſals for employment—a *carte blanche* from the doer of a Sunday Newſpaper, for the ſuperintendance of the *Parnaſſian Budget*, with a proviſo for the occaſional ſupply of a column of morality—an offer from the Editor of a Magazine for the copy-right of his conundrums—an order from Mr. *Packwood*, (accompanied with a preſent of a razor-ſtrop) for a dozen of advertiſements in rhyme, and a polite note from a lady of quality, requeſting to ſee his ſample-book, that ſhe may chuſe a few ſonnets for a novel written by herſelf, and ſoon to be publiſhed.—Unluckily however, as Mr. HAIRBRAIN informs me, he cannot pay that immediate attention to his cuſtomers that they deſerve; having, before the arrival of any of their orders, engaged himſelf as clerk during the drawing of the preſent Lottery, in a diſtinguiſhed office in this City.—Indeed he complains heavily to me, of the unworthineſs of an occupation, to which hard neceſſity alone compelled him to have recourſe: he laments the ſlavery of being ſhaved and powdered every day, and hints that his abilities are not ſufficiently reſpected by his employer. But, even in theſe circumſtances, his muſe is not idle—for he informs me that he has planned a poem, in *blank* verſe, which is to have the Lottery for its ſubject, and his employer (unleſs he mends his manners) for its hero.

But independent of the advantages which this gentleman has gained by means of the Flapper, I flatter myſelf my readers will think themſelves obliged to me for publiſhing his letter, ſince to it they owe the little production which I ſhall this day preſent them—It was compoſed, as the friend to whom I owe the communication informs me, ſeveral years ago—probably at the time when the poems which evidently ſuggeſted it, were firſt publiſhed, and when the queſtion of their genuineneſs excited ſo much controverſy in the literary world. There are few of my readers unacquainted with the work to which I refer, and I am ſure I need offer no apology, even to its warmeſt admirers, for ſo happy an imitation as the following.

*ARTREA,
A POEM.

Gloomy is winter's brow—Black miſts ſhade thy head O Slieve-gallan, and ſpread to the dark brown plain—The hoar froſt rattles in the heath.—

" Who is this that ſullen and lonely advances ſlow through the miry " way?" It is G—— the ſon of the Sermon, guiding his high-boned, deep-ſtumbling, ſwift-ſtarting daughter of the car and plow: black was once the mare, and *M'Gaw* is her name of renown——" Say, ſon of the Sermon, " whither doſt thou guide thy ſtumbling ſteed? for deep are the ſteps of " the marſhes, and rough the ſtones of the way: low o'er our heads hang " the watry clouds, and the ſpirit of the ſhower ſends forth his voice— " —— Say, ſon of the Sermon, whither doſt thou guide thy ſtumbling " ſteed?"

" To *Artrea* do I move, O *Macpherſon*, to pour forth my words unto the " ſons of the loom—To them do I utter my voice aloud, and warn them " againſt the ſtrength of the ſtill.† But the ſons of the loom regard not my " voice—it is unto them as the wind that whiſtles through the long graſs, " when the ſhades of evening ariſe, and the dark-red moon ſends her pale " light over the half-green hills."

" Go not to *Artrea's* ſteep hill," ſaid *Macpherſon* of theſe times—" the ſons of the loom reſt in their red clay walls from the ſtormy wind and rain."

" No," replied the ſage, " I will never turn my back—the ſon of the " ſermon will preach or die—Though the waters ruſh from heaven,—though " the north wind drive the guſts againſt my viſage, as the ſtorm daſhes the " rocks of *Raghra*, when the billows of the ocean roar."

The blaſt ſhakes the leafleſs trees: the torrents foam down the hills. Slowly he paſſes the drear black moſs, and ſlowly the hills of ſand. He lights beneath the ſpreading oak, and climbs the ſteep of *Artrea*.

" —— But where are my heroes that they come not at my voice? and " why ſit they in the ſmoak of their hearths? where is *Lowry*, the terror of " tythe-men? why rolls not here the ſquint eye of *Lammon?* drinks *Henſon* " the ſtrength of the ſtill? and where are the long grey locks of *Hamilton?*

Dreary as ſtand the few hawthorns of *Montrelony's* northern ſide—ſo few and diſmal ſtand around the ſons of ancient *Artrea*. Sallow are their pale brown cheeks, and haggard their yellow brow; rough their wriſts of itch, as the hawthorn buds in the ſpring, when the ſun looks through the ſhower, and the earth opens to its warmth.

He mounts the place of many words—The ſleet ruſhes through the breaches of oak, and lights on the grey-green wall—the blaſt whiſtles to his voice—the wind is in his grey wig.

* *Artrea*, probably the place which ſtill bears the ſame name in the province of *Ulſter*, which anſwers to the deſcription here given.

† A liquor, perhaps ſomewhat reſembling that which at this day is drank in large quantities in the northern parts of *Ireland*.

As

As rattles the hail on *Slieve-gallen's* ſide, when the thunderſtorm rends the ſky—ſo thick, ſo many, and ſo impetuous ruſh forth his ſounding words. Unmoved as ſtands *Slieve-gallen* when the hail rattles on its ſide, ſo unmoved did they hear his words, for they loved the ſtrength of the ſtill.

He leaves the place of words—he ſpurs his ſteed over the moſs—drenched is his hat of beaver, and heavy his coat, of rain: his feet are like two lumps of ſnow on the top of *Carntogher*.

The white houſe of the hill appears to his longing eyes in the midſt of the wide bog, as the moon in the depth of night, when the Traveller bleſſes her beams.

Lovely as the ſun-beam of morning, his ſpouſe ruſhes forth to his view: ſhe ſtretches forth her white arms: ſhe chears his frozen heart—lights up his faded eye. The feaſt is ſpread before him, and the blazing peat ſheds warmth into his limbs—Fair ſmiles his much-beloved—he leans his head on her boſom, and the memory of his labours departs from his mind.*

* This poem is a perfect epic: the action one, complete and agreeably diverſified—and according to the rule of the beſt critics, it ends happily.

TO all *lovers of Literature* in general, and the *curious in Criticiſm* in particular.

HERMES WILKINS,

Philometaphyz and *Critico-Chymico Statiſt* and *Aſſaymaſter*, begs leave through the channel of your uſeful paper, to apprize the literary world of his invaluable diſcoveries.

Having long obſerved that while phyſical ſcience has received from the invention of uſeful inſtruments much aſſiſtance, the metaphyſics have been left without any aids from human art, *Wilkins* has with the greateſt induſtry applied a conſummate knowledge of medicine, mechanics, magic and mathematics (laborioufly acquired through a length of years) to give to that truly ſublime ſcience the advantages of intellectual inſtruments, models, diagrams, tablets, calculations, &c. analogous to thoſe which have been ſo ſucceſsfully employed in branches of knowledge of inferior dignity. From the ſucceſs of his labours, he is enabled to promiſe to the critic and the metaphyſician certainty in the place of conjecture, and to give ſtability to ſpeculation.

Among many thouſand aſſiſtances never known before, he begs leave to particularize the following, viz.

Critical tables of *dry meaſure*, *long meaſure*, *time*, *avoirdupoiſe*, *money*, &c. by which all ſpecies of poetical meaſurement may be readily adjuſted—indefinite phraſes, ſuch as *many-a-mile*, *many-a-time and oft*, *ſomewhat more*, *vaſt*, &c. &c. accurately calculated—as alſo the quantities of water in *ſtreamlets*

or

or *rills*, dimenſions of *the plain*, *the deep*, &c. according to the ſpirit of the compoſitions, degrees of *wealth* neceſſary to conſtitute a man *rich*, according to the condition of the author, &c. &c.

Fancy-ſpectacles for all ages, fortunes and qualities—by the help of which a writer may ſee what to ordinary perſons is actually *inviſible*, an audience perceive a *ſtorm* or *a battle* in *the theatre*, and a *grown gentleman* read *paſtoral poetry* with pleaſure—alſo *microſcopic augmentations* for giving importance to triſles, highly neceſſary to orators, &c. with *phoſphoric illuminators* for *inflammatory* ſpeeches and political *ſquibs*.

Horoſcopic charts to enable authors in any ſtate of public taſte, and with any given degree of literary merit, to calculate the probable longevity of their works; N. B. this article is alſo well deſerving the attention of theatrical managers who bring out new pieces, and ſuch bookſellers as deal in novels and pamphlets.

Literary taliſmans whereby a reader may follow his author from ſubject to ſubject, from place to place without much confuſion, with *Mental Achromatics* for removing prejudice, &c.

Compleat ſyſtems of *expanſors* on an entire new conſtruction, (thoſe hitherto in uſe on the *wire-drawing* plan, in which *ſubtilty* was united with *ſolidity*, having been long ſince exploded.) By *Wilkins's expanſors*, any ſmall quantity of thought may be attenuated through any number of pages of whatever ſize, within any deſired degree of approach to abſolute *inanity*.

The much admired new *puzzling-ſticks*, containing *metaphyſical queſtions* to exerciſe the comprehenſion—*ſituations* for *noveliſts* to get out of—*parodoxes* for *politicians* to ſolve—*laws* to find loop-holes in—*tough caſes* for *tender conſciences*, &c. &c.

Wilkins's celebrated *figure boxes*, in which the moſt approved objects are repreſented arranged according to their *admitted likeneſſes*. It is unneceſſary to obſerve how highly uſeful theſe muſt be to the art of compoſition, inaſmuch as the unlocking a drawer will at a moment, ſupply an author with as many *ſimilies* as he may deſire.

All the above articles, with many others too numerous to be inſerted, to be ſold by the inventor, No. 17, *Latin's-Court*, for READY MONEY only. Where alſo may be had, the famous *Saccharometer* for aſcertaining the degrees of that undefinable quality called *ſweetneſs* in compoſition, with *metaphyſical plumbs* for determining the *depth* of *reflections*, and *weight* of arguments, *intellectual antipriſms* to diſcover truth, however *diſtorted* and *diſcoloured*, &c. &c.

*** Wilkins alſo furniſhes for hire pictures of *Italian* ſcenes for authors who are engaged in works of Engliſh deſcriptive poetry, and hopes ſhortly to be able to offer to the public, his *genealogical charts* for dealers in *allegories*, and his *tables of invention*—a grand deſideratum in modern literature.

A. Z. F.

DUBLIN:
Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.
[Price, Two Pence.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER LXVI.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1796.

SOMETIME ſince I made a few obſervations on the non-exiſtence of Novels in the ancient world—I then confined myſelf to the operation of a ſingle cauſe—the degraded ſituation of the female ſex: but though this is of itſelf ſufficient to account for that deficiency, there are other circumſtances which deſerve to be noticed, not only as contributing to the effect in queſtion, but as tending to throw light on the general differences between the ancient and modern ſtate of ſociety.

It is to be obſerved that at the periods alluded to, not the novel only, but every other ſpecies of literary compoſition which extracts matter of entertainment from the varieties of human character, was either imperfectly cultivated or entirely unknown—works of humour in particular, ſeem never to have made their appearance, except in the dramatick form; and even on the ſtage, exhibitions of the comick kind were either made up of groſs ribaldry and the moſt ſcurrilous perſonalities—or, if ſketches of a more delicate nature were attempted, the materials appear to have been quickly exhauſted. It may be ſaid that we have ſuch ſcanty ſpecimens of the more improved ſtate of the *Grecian* comedy as to make it ſcarcely poſſible for us to form a ſatisfactory opinion—But the plays of *Terence*, the profeſſed copyiſt of *Menander*, leave us no room to doubt, that the reſources of the *Grecian* drama in reſpect of characters, were ſo limited as to make it neceſſary to introduce ſimilar perſonages almoſt into every performance. The miſer and the ſpendthrift—the peeviſh old man and the youthful debauchee—the wily courtezan and the ſly domeſtick, who ſupports the twofold function of pander and buffoon, meet us almoſt at every turn—and, though it muſt be granted, that they are repreſented with ſtrength and juſtneſs, and with that attention to nature which enſures their effect in ſpite of changing manners—yet thoſe nicer ſhades of difference which at this day ſhew themſelves in real life are ſcarcely diſcernible—It is the ſame miſer and the ſame ſpendthrift—the ſame courtezan and the ſame cunning ſlave which appeared in one drama, that afterward come forward to perform nearly the ſame part in another.

But whence could this remarkable ſameneſs of characters ariſe? the ſtile, the ſentiments, the various beauties of *Terence* are ſufficient to ſhew that it

cannot be fairly attributed to the weakneſs of his genius or the ſterility of his mind: we muſt of courſe infer, that he is only deficient, becauſe the ſtate of ſociety at the times in which either he or his maſter lived, did not afford more copious matter to work upon. His employing his talents almoſt entirely in copying from a *Grecian* dramatiſt, evinces that his own age and nature were in a ſtate of abſolute barrenneſs—and the want of variety which ſtrikes us after all, ſerves to prove that *Menander* was in this reſpect only a few degrees leſs ſtraitened than his diſciple.

At firſt view this obſervation may poſſibly appear whimſical if not unfounded—but a little attention to the actual circumſtances of ſociety both in *Greece* and *Rome*, will, I conceive, be ſufficient to put it beyond doubt. The fact I dwelt upon in my former paper upon this ſubject, itſelf implies that human character in ſuch a ſtate of manners muſt have been comparatively monotonous. Formed as men and women are for one common domeſtick ſociety, the full developement of the tempers and diſpoſitions of either ſex can then only take place, when they jointly live up to the laws of their nature, that is, as I have already obſerved, where there is an habitual interchange of reſpectful tenderneſs on the one ſide and of grateful affection on the other—and where they both mutually contribute not merely to the voluptuous gratification but to the rational happineſs of each other. It is in this way only that human nature can receive the moſt perfect poliſh of which it is ſuſceptible—and without this, its richeſt tints and moſt delicate veinings muſt ſtill lie latent under a duſky and harſh exterior. But ſo long as this ruggedneſs extends itſelf over the manners of men, what can be more obvious than that thoſe varying traits which are now conſtantly ſtriking upon our view, which have in modern times furniſhed ſuch abundant ſubjects not only for the comick writer but for the noveliſt and the eſſayiſt, muſt have been concealed in a dull and unintereſting uniformity.

But another reaſon may be aſſigned why variety of character ſhould have prevailed much leſs in ancient *Greece* and *Rome* than in modern *Europe*—I mean the ſtriking difference in their political ſituation. The government of both thoſe ancient ſtates in the earlier periods of their hiſtory tended almoſt neceſſarily to engage the whole cultivated claſs of ſociety in the greateſt degree of political activity—all men of opulence or of talent became inevitably intangled in the purſuit of power, and were whirled around in the vortex of an almoſt frantick ambition. Having therefore but one and the ſame ruling paſſion, they would conſequently acquire a ſameneſs of character, and whatever varying tendencies they had received from nature—theſe would ſoon be aſſimilated to each other, and loſt to view in the overbearing eagerneſs of their darling purſuits.

Had the tumultuous conſtitutions of *Athens* and of *Rome* ſettled down into ſuch governments as would have merely checked the violence of the publick mind by narrowing the ſphere of political action, without deſtroying its ſa-

lutary

tutary force or coercing it by undue reſtraints, in ſuch circumſtances the natural varieties of human character would poſſibly have ſoon put themſelves forth. Society being ſafe and tranquil though not depreſſed or intimidated, each man would have had both ſcope and leiſure to find for himſelf and manifeſt to others the peculiar bent of his own mind and temper, as a liquor kept turbid by agitation, ſhews its real quality and colour when once it is left to ſettle and ſubſide—but this ſtate of tranquil liberty—this political temperament ſo evidently friendly to the growth both of the milder manners and the milder virtues, ſcarcely ever fell to the lot of either of theſe ancient ſtates: On the contrary, they ſunk from one extreme to another; from turbulence to torpor, and an indiſcriminate licentiouſneſs in morals precluded the variations of character in the latter periods of both *Athens* and *Rome* almoſt as effectually as the licentiouſneſs of their politicks had done before.

I ſay *almoſt* as effectually—for whatever ſpecimens of character-drawing we derive from the *Greeks* and *Romans*, it is to theſe latter periods we are indebted for them. Democracy had terminated at *Athens* before *Menander* wrote, and in the ſatires of *Horace* we find ſketches of men and manners, which it is eaſy to ſee could only have been taken in ſuch a tranquil period as the reign of *Auguſtus*—This favourable ſeaſon however was ſoon ſucceeded by times of oppreſſion and degradation—and yet in a happier interval we ſee one writer appearing, who in the ſpecies of compoſition to which I allude, comes nearer the manner of the moderns than perhaps any other in the whole ancient world: the learned reader will eaſily perceive that I mean the well-known *Lucian*.

The later governments of Europe have conduced to the tranquillizing of ſociety, without that proneneſs to abſolute deſpotiſm which ſo generally marked the monarchick form in earlier times. We find accordingly that variety of character has proportionably prevailed in the modern world; and *that* variety has called forth the moſt diverſified exerciſe of the deſcriptive pen. Scarcely had the morning of literature opened upon Europe, after the long night of Gothick darkneſs, when *Eraſmus* caſt around him a keen and diſcriminating glance, and tracing merely what he ſaw in real life, has given us more intereſting pictures of ſocial man, than could be found in all who went before him,—many we know have trodden in his ſteps, and the ſtream of life has ſtill been throwing out freſh matter which genius has laid hold of and improved. The more at their eaſe men have lived, the more that matter has abounded—and *Britain* in particular has been as celebrated for its fertility in odd characters as it has been for the regularity of its juriſprudence, and the freedom of its conſtitution.

On

On the whole, whether I be right or wrong in the reaſons I have aſſigned, the fact itſelf cannot be diſputed, that intereſting pictures of men and manners did not rank amongſt the attainments of the ancient world; and that, let the cauſe have been what it might, they very ſeldom even made ſuch an attempt. And yet there is *one book*, which if it were to be conſidered as a work of fancy, would afford a moſt extraordinary exception to this remark. The hiſtorical part of the New Teſtament contains a deliniation of character ſo acute, ſo delicate, ſo ſingular and yet ſo natural, as fairly to challenge a compariſon with any thing of a ſimilar kind, that ever came from the pen of *Eraſmus*, *Le Sage*, *Fielding*, or even *Shakeſpear* himſelf. Shall we then believe, that men, perhaps illiterate, and certainly obſcure, roſe thus aſtoniſhingly above the brighteſt geniuſes of their time? On the contrary ſhall we not confidently conclude, that unable as they muſt have been to fabricate ſuch a tranſcendent fiction, they merely deſcribed a *real fact*. In a word, ſhall we not adopt the ſentiment of the enraptured *Rouſſeau*—that the "contriver of "ſuch a narration would have been little leſs wonderful than the hero of it."

L.

DUBLIN:

Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.

[Price, Two Pence.]

The Editor will thankfully receive from the Friends of Literature, any communications they may favour him with on the ſubjects appropriated to the nature of this publication.

Perſons deſirous of having this paper ſent to the country, are requeſted to apply to the Clerks of the Roads at the General Poſt-Office.

[A Letter Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER LXVII.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1796.

Nullius addictus jurare in verba Magiſtri. HORACE.

My judgment no proud Critic ſhall decide,
Unleſs he gain my reaſon at his ſide. ANON.

I SHALL employ this paper in obſerving upon Johnſon's Criticiſm on ſome of the Epitaphs of Pope; beginning, as he does, with that Don orſet. My reader ſhould have the Epitaphs and Criticiſm before him:

The firſt Epitaph is as follows:

DORSET, the grace of Courts, the Muſes' pride,
Patron of arts and judge of nature, died.
The ſcourge of pride, tho' ſanctified or great,
Of fops in learning and of knaves in ſtate;
Yet ſoft his nature, though ſevere his lay,
His anger moral and his wiſdom gay.
Bleſt Satyriſt! who touch'd the mean ſo true,
As ſhew'd vice had his hate and pity too.
Bleſt Courtier! who could King and Country pleaſe,
Yet ſacred keep his friendſhips and his eaſe.
Bleſt Peer! his great forefathers' ev'ry grace
Reflecting and reflected on his race;
Where other *Buckhurſts*, other *Dorſets* ſhine,
And patriots ſtill, or poets, deck the line.

"The firſt Diſtich," ſays the Critic, "contains a kind of information "which few would want; namely, that the ſubject of the Epitaph had "died." But this is not the intelligence which Pope has given. He has ſuggeſted a more important truth; viz. that neither elegance nor learning, diſtinction, liberality nor taſte, can exempt their owner from the lot of man; but that all the towering dignities of life muſt end in the awful level of the grave. This fact we know, but may not recollect—we may not make it, as we ſhould, the baſis of momentous inference; nor extract from it a rational and permanent rule of conduct. The Poet inſinuates reflections, like thoſe of *Hamlet*, when he is "tracing the noble duſt of *Alexander*;" or ſuch as occur in a fine ſtanza of *Gray's* incomparable Elegy, ending with this line,

"The paths of glory lead but to the grave."

I do not indeed contend, that *Pope* has thrown this ſentiment into language either ſtriking or correct. He meant to announce, that *Dorſet*, the eminent, the accompliſhed, was no more: to impreſs us, by a quick tranſition from the buſtle of brilliant life to the dreary ſtillneſs of the unnoticed grave. But this he expreſſes in a way that is ludicrouſly familiar, telling us (in, perhaps, bad grammar,) not that *Dorſet* is dead, but that he "*died*." —When did he die? Or what did he die of? Such are the queſtions which this familiar tenſe provokes. If on the contrary he had reminded us, that *Dorſet*, the once boaſted and admired *was dead*, the ſenſe of the diſtich would be more perfectly conveyed, and the contraſt between life and death, more ſudden and complete.

Johnſon cannot underſtand what is meant by "Judge of nature." It may mean a judge of what is beautiful in nature.

" Patron of Arts, and Judge of Nature :"

He is a liberal protector of genius and the fine arts, and has that quick discernment of the beautiful in nature, which is requisite towards deciding upon art ; the excellence of which latter has continual preference to nature, and consists in judicious selection, as well as just representation. The first half of the line states *Dorset's* province ; the latter shews his qualification : The first does little more than praise his bounty : the latter more immediately commends his taste. The picture of an extensive bog, intersected with drains of black stagnated water—and covered with heaps of turf spread out to dry,—may, (if well painted) be an extremely just representation of a thing really existing :—but a judge of nature would condemn the artist's choice of subject ; and not only instruct him how, but direct him what to paint. He who can admire the tranquil beauty of a setting sun—or more tumultuous grandeur of the sea, agitated by a storm : who in the moral world can adore the lustre of a virtuous deed—or admire the din and tempest of conflicting passions—may, without impropriety, be called a judge of nature : " *He cannot alter**," but he may estimate their value.

" Blest Courtier !"

Johnson doubts the propriety of commending a courtier for keeping his ease sacred. But the Poet does not extol *Dorset* merely for not having sacrificed his *ease*, (which the Critic, by the way, appears to confound with indolence and inaction,) but for that address, which enabled him to please his king and country without the sacrifice. As to that misapplication of the word " Sacred," of which the Critic complains, I would only remark, (without directly opposing a censure for which the motive is so virtuous) that this term " Sacred," is used to signify " inviolate"—" safe from intrusion ;"—by what I believe Rhetoricians would call a metonymy of cause for effect. And thus also in another couplet, the *sanctified* pride of fops in learning, may properly enough describe the privileged and entrenched presumption—and usurped controul, of such literary persons as abuse the reverence attached to established reputation. Besides, *Pope* may have alluded in these expressions to the ecclesiastical part of the community,—which possessed much of the learning, and perhaps no small portion of the pride of the country.

In the distich beginning " *blest subject*," *Johnson* says, there is one line of which *Pope* was not the author ; and adds, that it is the business of critical justice, to give every bird of the Muses his proper feather ; yet he concludes without informing us which of the lines is borrowed ; or from whom it has been taken.

Blest Peer ! his great fore-fathers' ev'ry grace
Reflecting, &c.

I beg not to be considered as particularly admiring these lines, though I should dissent from *Johnson*, and think that the blessing ascribed to the *Peer*—HAS some connection with the peerage ; that is to say, if peerage has any connection with high descent, and an illustrious train of ancestry : in short, if Peer and *Nobleman* be terms any thing like synonymous. I know not any more than *Johnson*, whether this epitaph be worthy of the writer ; but, from the exertions of any man to whom I attributed poetic talent, I should expect a better ; and, therefore, I incline to think, that the one in question, owes more than it contributes to the reputation of its author. Perhaps its merit consists in well enough suggesting the complicated eminence of *Dorset's* character ; that he was distinguished in the triple capacity of author, statesman, and man of rank. It contains some good lines ; but I do not, on the whole, approve of the language or versification.

I pass nex to the lines on Sir *William Trumbull*.

A pleasing

* See Johnson's Criticism.

A pleaſing form, a firm yet cautious mind,
Sincere though prudent; conſtant yet reſign'd;
Honour unchang'd, a principle profeſt,
Fix'd to one ſide, but mod'rate to the reſt.
An honeſt Courtier, yet a Patriot too,
Juſt to his prince and to his country true.
Fill'd with the ſenſe of age, the fire of youth,
A ſcorn for wrangling, yet a zeal for truth;
A gen'rous faith, from ſuperſtition free,
A love to peace and hate of tyranny:
Such this man was, who now, from earth remov'd
At length enjoys that liberty he lov'd.

I believe that *Johnſon's* objection to the omiſſion of the name in epitaphs is ſo far well founded, as that it will be better to inſert it where the writer can with convenience; but I can ſcarcely go farther in my acquieſcence. I cannot conſider the omiſſion as "a fault, for which ſcarcely any beauty can "compenſate." The tomb, ſo long as it laſts, will probably tell the name: ſo will the title of the Epitaph in the Poet's works; which has as fair a chance of enduring, as the lines to which it is prefixed.

The remark on Pope's ill judged oppoſition in this *vile* line "an honeſt Courtier yet a Patriot *too*" I muſt acquieſce in, with the praiſe which it deſerves; not for the acuteneſs of the Criticiſm, but for the ſentiment from which it flowed.

The 4th, 8th, 9th, and 10th lines are good.

It is a fault in this compoſition, that you muſt wait until the 11th line, to find the key, which is, rather clumſily, to open the conſtruction of the preceding ten.

On the Hon. SIMON HARCOURT, only ſon of Lord Chancellor HARCOURT.

To this ſad ſhrine, whoe'er thou art, draw near,
Here lies the friend moſt lov'd, the ſon moſt dear:
Who ne'er knew joy but friendſhip might divide,
Or gave his father grief but when he died.
How vain is reaſon, eloquence how weak
If *Pope* muſt tell what Harcourt cannot ſpeak!
Oh! let thy once lov'd friend inſcribe thy ſtone,
And with a father's ſorrows, mix his own.

This Epitaph has conſiderable beauty; and the two laſt lines are by no means ſuperfluous. The Poet having in the ſecond line, ſtated the two relations under which he chuſes to repreſent the deceaſed, in the 3d and 4th ſhews, that he well deſerved the ſignal affection of which, as ſon and friend, he had been the object; (and by the way, the exaggeration in the 4th line, is tender and affecting;) in the next diſtich he ſtates the father—ſpite of his firm reaſon and extraordinary eloquence, overwhelmed and ſilenced by that paternal grief and affection, (the degree of which you are led to eſtimate, by the ſtrength of what they have ſubdued) to be incapacitated from a taſk to the performance of which he had the beſt title; and the concluding lines ſtate the duty to have thus devolved upon the Poet, whoſe ſorrow is not like the father's, ſo exceſſive as to be inarticulate: they are addreſſed to the manes of his friend, whom in a tender apoſtrophe, he conjures to accept from his friend, what his fond father is unable to beſtow. The name in line the 6th, is indeed artfully introduced; the 4th line conſpiring to inform you, that *Harcourt* was the father. Surely the identity of the perſon entombed, is thus better aſcertained than if he had been formally named. An Epitaph ſhould ſpeak the language of ſorrow; and ſorrow, though ſometimes quaint, is never formal.

Johnſon's objection to the redundancy of words in the firſt couplet of the Epitaph on Craggs

Stateſman, yet friend to truth! of ſoul ſincere,
In action faithful, and in honour clear,

ſeems well founded; and evinces ſomething better than fair Criticiſm; viz.

Sound

Sound morals. But (though no friend in general to *point*) I cannot agree in his cenſure on the 4th line:

"Who gain'd no title; and who loſt no friend:"

for even admitting mankind's practice to be not ſufficiently depraved—for the firſt part of the line to imply a Commendation; yet, at all events, the inſinuation ſeems delicate and pleaſing, that he is a gainer upon balance, who, by failing to acquire a title, eſcapes the loſing of a friend. On the whole I approve of theſe lines on *Craggs*—notwithſtanding the *violence* for which the Critick candidly allows, and which may have contributed to prefix the *Latin* to this Epitaph. Though as to this junction of *Latin* and *Engliſh* in one inſcription, I cannot eaſily ſee the objection to circulating by means of a general language the character or ſituation of the deceaſed more extenſively than could otherwiſe be done; nor yet to the reſuming of your native tongue for the purpoſe of removing all reſtraint upon the ſimple expreſſion of tenderneſs and grief; and communicating the praiſes of your friend, to the ear of your unlearned Countryman.

I agree in *Johnſon's* Criticiſm on the Epitaph upon *Rowe*, whoſe tomb is made a ſort of finger-poſt to put you in the road to *Dryden's*. *Pope's* admiration for this latter writer is well known; whoſe idea, having croſſed him, appears to have withdrawn him from his ſubject.

I alſo concur with the Critic in admiring the lines on Mrs. Corbet:

Here reſts a woman, good without pretence,
Bleſt with plain reaſon and with ſober ſenſe:
No conqueſts ſhe but o'er herſelf deſir'd,
No arts eſſay'd but not to be admir'd.
Paſſion and pride were to her ſoul unknown,
Convinc'd that virtue only is our own;
So unaffected, ſo compos'd a mind,
So firm yet ſoft, ſo ſtrong, yet ſo refin'd,
Heaven, as its pureſt Gold, by tortures tried,
The ſaint ſuſtain'd it, but the woman died.

And *ſcarcely* diſſent from his regret at the omiſſion of her name. A like omiſſion is obſervable in an Epitaph, not improper to be compared with this; I mean Mr. Gray's fine one upon *Mrs. Clarke*, where the lines,

"Her infant image here below,
"Sits ſmiling on a father's woe."

and the ſix that follow, (in ſpite of the harſhneſs of the interrogation,) are no common ones.

The objection to the fourth line,

"No arts eſſay'd, but not to be admir'd,"

made by *Johnſon's* female friend, deſerves attention. The endeavouring not to be admired, (and one ſhould be curious to hear the nature of ſuch endeavours ſpecified,) conveys to me no very natural or amiable idea. It ſuggeſts the vanity of a woman—continually apprehenſive that ſhe will become the object of admiration, unleſs ſhe be upon her guard to prevent it. I ſhould indeed eſteem a woman the more for controuling her love of admiration, and concentrating it, if married, on her huſband; but upon this ſubject I ſhould be glad to hear the ſentiments of my fair Readers. The 3d line is good: the 8th finely deſcriptive of that odd union of oppoſite excellencies which forms the rare perfection of female character. The laſt line pleaſes me: I do not conſider it as containing a mere point; but as fairly noticing a diſtinction between the mere animal, and the moral being, which does really exiſt, and ariſes from the peculiarity of human ſituation; from the ſituation of creatures (as the ſame Author expreſſes it) "placed on the iſthmus of a middle ſtate."

P.

The Flapper.

NUMBER LXVIII.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17, 1796.

Tu Magiſtra morum! CICERO, TUSC. QUÆS.

I have often been led to regret that the moraliſt and the divine do not more frequently inculcate the neceſſity of cultivating taſte. That the divine however ſhould leſs ſtrenuouſly inſiſt on the topic may in ſome degree be accounted for. It is not perhaps ſo much to be wondered at, that he who urges doctrines enforced by the infinite and everlaſting ſanctions of the divine authority ſhould reject the comparatively feeble aids which might be derived from a regulation of the fancy: but it might naturally be expected, that he who urges the performance of moral duty on motives merely human, as the mere moraliſt muſt do, ſhould endeavour to ſecure in his ſupport the influence of taſte, one of the ſtrongeſt and moſt operative of moral cauſes.

Taſte is a moral ſenſe. Like the ſenſe of feeling in the body, it is in continual operation, and influences, in a greater or leſs degree, every act in which the mind is concerned. Taſte directs us in our choice of [illegible] ſelection of friends, and in our purſuit of pleaſure. We are governed by taſte when we fix on a profeſſion, and taſte is perhaps the predominating motive in matrimonial engagements; we educate our children as our taſte directs, and, in many inſtances, it operates even beyond the limit of life, and preſcribes the manner in which our property ſhall be diſpoſed when we ceaſe to exiſt. We may aſſign to taſte yet a higher province. It is the advocate, or the opponent of virtue, as it has been formed on true or falſe principles. I ſuſpect we ſhall find, if we conſult our own experience, that the moſt prominent of our good and bad actions have been the reſult of ſome ſtriking picture exhibited by the imagination to influence the will, that is, have been the reſult of taſte directing paſſion. Reaſon, it is true, may ſometimes counteract taſte, and, in oppoſition to it, direct our conduct. Reaſon may mark the line which ſeparates right from wrong—virtue from vice; and the ſanctions of religion when enforced by reaſon, may induce us to adopt the one, and reject the other. But how ſeldom does man reaſon? Taſte when once formed acts without the miniſtry of reaſon; and, like the principle of gravity in the material world, operates with a uniform and uninterrupted tenor. How important is it then that a principle of ſuch conſtant and univerſal energy ſhould be rightly formed?

It has long been a favourite amuſement of mine to gueſs at a man's moral character from his taſte in ordinary matters, in dreſs or in building, in

painting or in muſic: and I cannot ſay that I have often found myſelf miſtaken in the concluſions which I form on that ſubject. I find it neceſſary however to diſtinguiſh carefully between that taſte which a man really has, and that which he profeſſes; for in no inſtance have I found hypocriſy more frequent. If, for example, I hear a lady profeſſing a ſtrong taſte for dramatic entertainments, who apparently goes to the Theatre but to view the company, to chat with a party, or exhibit her dreſs, I am inclined to believe that her mind is too coarſe to derive pleaſure from ſuch a ſource, and that her claim to taſte is made—but to cover the want of it. When I hear a man declaring his admiration of ſimplicity and his love for neatneſs, while he is either dreſſed in the abſurd extremities of the mode, or defective in perſonal cleanlineſs, it occurs to me that I hear a fop or a ſloven affecting the man of taſte. Him who profeſſes a taſte for ſymmetry and order I conſider as a cheat, if he makes an appearance in the world diſproportionate to his means: and I find myſelf inclined to contradict the woman who boaſts a nice taſte in harmonizing ſounds, and well arranged colours, while ſhe ſeems to indulge in the harſh notes of domeſtic diſcord, and daubs herſelf with paints that outrage nature.

Though it be dangerous to give a woman credit for poſſeſſing a good taſte which her practice contradicts, it is ſafe to conclude that he, whoſe conduct is ſuch as good taſte warrants poſſeſſes good taſte. Of a man whoſe dreſs, [illegible] and ſtyle of living, are in ſtrict correſpondence to his ſituation in life—admitting nothing irregular or unbecoming—it would be injuſtice to deny that in theſe inſtances he has good taſte. The irregularities and the indecencies of life may ariſe in a thouſand ways; but order, fitneſs, and decorum, the genuine effects of good taſte, cannot with juſtice be attributed but to their proper cauſe. Confuſion is infinitely various, and may be produced by an infinite variety of cauſes; but regularity and proportion can be the reſult only of an acting intelligence. When we meet a coxcomb or a flirt, a debauchee or a coquet, we may be unable to aſcertain from what particular ſource their folly ariſes; but, when we ſee a man with the dignified ſimplicity of a gentleman in his manners—or a female treading in the ſtraight path which good ſenſe and the modeſty of her ſex point out—we cannot deny that both theſe characters have eſtabliſhed their claim to good taſte, becauſe ſuch effects could have been produced by no other quality.

An opinion has been long received, that the diſpoſitions of the mind gave a character to the features: it is much more certain, that the taſte influences and forms the morals. We every day meet faces indicative of diſpoſitions, which on a nearer acquaintance with the parties we find they do not poſſeſs: but it would be difficult indeed to find an inſtance of extreme propriety of conduct connected with a feeble or fooliſh mind; or of a man exhibiting to the world continued proofs of good ſenſe and good taſte, without really poſſeſſing theſe bleſſings. Phyſiognomy may deceive us, becauſe the

paſſions

paſſions which originally gave a caſt to the countenance may have been reſtrained and corrected by the ſubſequent influence of reaſon and religion; but ſo long as taſte remains a fixed principle operating on the judgment, ſo long muſt it influence the general tenor of conduct in common life, and produce in the manners and actions of men ſomething analogous to thoſe appearances in the material world which it delights to contemplate.

Theſe obſervations on the intimate union which ſubſiſts between taſte and manner have been ſuggeſted to me by a compariſon of the characters of two perſons of my acquaintance, who ſet out together in the world, with no other difference in their circumſtances than that which was made by the different complexions of their minds. Their ſubſequent fortunes have been very different.

Laertes poſſeſſed a moderate fortune from an uncle under whoſe care he had been educated with the moſt ſedulous attention. Though not deſtitute of a ſtrong underſtanding and good memory, he had nevertheleſs made but little way in either ſcience or literature. Neither in ſchool nor in college could it be diſcovered to which the bent of his genius tended—for to both he appeared alike indifferent. It was ſufficiently clear however at a very early age, that he had a ſtrong tendency to ſenſual gratification, that with a moſt excellent conſtitution he had ſtrong paſſions, and that theſe paſſions he was inclined to gratify without much ſolicitude as to the mode or object. It could not indeed be ſaid that the youth of *Laertes* had been ſtained by any flagrant enormity, but neither could it be ſaid that it had been marked by any bright act of generoſity or virtue. The principle by which it had been governed was merely that of animal inſtinct, which led to acts that, in a moral point of view, might ſometimes be called vice, and ſometimes virtue. At the uſual time of life, *Laertes* married. It was a marriage neither of love nor of intereſt: it was a marriage of convenience. Finding a female companion neceſſary to manage his domeſtic affairs, he took a wife without troubling himſelf to look for accompliſhments, which he could neither reliſh nor judge of. As he had no predominant propenſity to one plan of life more than another, he paſſed away much of his youth in indolence, and aggravated this indolence by a ſlovenly and indiſcriminating extravagance. Without taſte for riſing to ſuperiority in any particular purſuit, *Laertes* had a general vanity. Whatever expenſe ſeemed likely to raiſe him into notice, whether it was incurred by extravagant faſhion in dreſs, or coſtly ſtyle in equipage or living, he entered into it without any principle of ſelection or taſte. He was not indeed eminent for extreme elegance in either his houſe, furniture or table, but each of theſe were diſtinguiſhed by being more coſtly than thoſe of his neighbours. Having no notion of proportioning expenditure to income, the affairs of *Laertes* were ſoon embarraſſed; and for a time his embarraſſments were relieved by the meaneſt of falſehood, or the contrivance of clumſy fraud. So long as theſe anſwered,

ſwered, he was not prevented by any pride of character from reſorting to them. But theſe arts ſoon failed. The ſale of his eſtate followed, and an execution converted his coſtly lumber into caſh for his creditors. To wealth without honour ſucceeded poverty without reſpect. *Laertes* who, when he was affluent, knew not how to give dignity to riches, when he became poor became deſpicable, and for the indiſcriminate diſſoluteneſs of high life, his preſent ſubſtitute is an equally indiſcriminate groſſneſs of vulgar debauch.

Euphranor enjoyed from his father a fortune ſomewhat leſs than that of *Laertes*. His education had been the ſame, but it had produced different fruits. He had great love for the abſtruſe ſciences, but he attached himſelf with aſſiduity to the Belles Lettres. Muſic he cultivated as an amuſement, and eloquence and compoſition he made objects of ſtudy. He was ſcarcely of age when he conceived a very ſtrong attachment to a young lady who, without much fortune, poſſeſſed an elegant perſon, fine taſte and a cultivated underſtanding. From this union which ſecured to him a ſource of domeſtic felicity, that after a lapſe of thirty years is not yet exhauſted, he derived the additional advantage of an extenſive and reputable connection. Theſe did not indeed immediately add much to his wealth, but as his pleaſures and habits of life were rather refined than expenſive, his patrimony was more than a competence. A ſmall but neat houſe, was ſufficiently large to receive the few ſelect friends whom he found ſuited to his taſte—diſſipation was ſuperfluous to a couple who found within themſelves ample means of giving charms to the privacy of domeſtic retirement. The ſame accuracy of taſte which directed in early life the ſtudies of *Euphranor*, which afterwards governed him in his choice of a wife, and continues to regulate his family arrangements, extends itſelf through the other parts of life. His amuſements, and his purſuits have been always marked by that caſt of elegance and refinement which is ſo attractive in his dreſs, his manner, and his converſation. Even his virtues partake of it—of the vice of *Euphranor* few inſtances can be remembered—his taſte deſpiſes what is groſs, and deteſts what is mean.

K.

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[A Letter Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER LXIX.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1796.

MY readers will, I truſt, excuſe me, if, this day, inſtead of ſearching for a ſubject which might gratify curioſity or amuſe the fancy, I merely communicate the thoughts which have ariſen ſpontaneouſly in my mind. It will eaſily be ſeen, that the ſolemnity of the ſeaſon has had ſome ſhare in exciting them. But thoſe whoſe approbation I am moſt anxious to ſecure will not, I am perſuaded, object to them on that account. They will feel on the contrary, that the reflections, which could not at any time be impertinent, *at this time*, it would be little ſhort of profaneneſs to repreſs.

We are about to commemorate the *origin* of *Chriſtianity*, in the *Birth* of its DIVINE AUTHOR. Can we do ſo, without ſeriouſly adverting to the peculiar circumſtances under which the religion we profeſs, appears at this day in the world? During the eighteen centuries, which have nearly elapſed, ſince its commencement, can we find a period in which the religious characters of mankind appeared ſo ſtrangely unſettled, or in which they, who feel the infinite importance of a conſcientious reſtraint upon human conduct, had room for more anxious ſolicitude?

The political leaders of a neighbouring country, have openly and avowedly renounced it; and the admirers of the philoſophy, and the policy of that country, throughout Europe and America, have diſcovered an almoſt general inclination to follow the pernicious example. The *Metaphyſician*, who hopes to excite admiration by the ſubtilty of his reaſonings, the *Hiſtorian* who wiſhes to diſplay his ſagacity by new methods of accounting for the events which he narrates—the *Politician* who aims at the abolition of exiſting attachments, in order to facilitate the eſtabliſhment of his own favourite ſyſtem, all, agree in making war on the Chriſtian religion by every imaginable means of attack—by fallacious argument—by inſidious miſrepreſentation—by ſneering ridicule—by ſavage ſcurrility.

But why this unexampled effort to put down *Chriſtianity?* Is it the love of virtue—is it a zeal for human happineſs that ſtimulates ſuch a phalanx of foes? Chriſtianity is that which teaches us to do to others as we would they ſhould do unto us: it is that which gives energy to *conſcience*, by opening to us the view of a judgment to come, and rewards and puniſhments in a future life: it is that which enjoins the neceſſity of regulated appetites and paſſions of upright conduct and a pure heart in order to acceptance with the Supreme Being: it is that which enjoins gentleneſs of manners, and ſweetneſs of temper, repreſſed reſentment, forgiveneſs of injuries, unlimited unremitting benevolence: it is that which chears the diſconſolate mourner, the broken-hearted victim of remedileſs diſtreſs with the proſpect of ſweet peace and rich remuneration in a better world.

Such is Chriſtianity.—Let its proofs be what they may—let the grounds on which it lays claim to divinity, be unqueſtionable or controvertible,—ſtill, is it not that which a good man, a lover of virtue, would naturally regard with ſome degree of predelection? Much leſs—could it poſſibly be conceived that any friend to human happineſs ſhould *hate* ſuch a ſyſtem—ſhould purſue it with the moſt unqualified rancour, and ſhew by every expreſſion that there is nothing he wiſhes ſo earneſtly as to be able to annihilate its in-

ſluence by making all men conſider it an unfounded impoſition on credulity? What is it in chriſtianity which excites this malevolence? The infidel who ſtill acknowledges the obligations of morality, is indebted for his own beſt maxims to the Ethicks of the Goſpel. He cannot then with any ſhadow of conſiſtency hold that in abhorrence which has made himſelf ſuperior as a moraliſt to the moſt enlightened ſages of the heathen world. Is it the promiſe of a future life which is ſo hateful? This can hardly be ſuppoſed. The boldeſt unbelievers ſometimes own that they "hope for happineſs in a future ſtate." Is it then ſo deſperately provoking that the principles of morality which all approve ſhould acquire additional force from the notion of a *divine ſanction*, or that that futurity which is acknowledged to be the natural object of our warmeſt wiſhes, ſhould be looked forward to with *certainty*, on the ground of a *divine declaration?* What could be conceived more deſirable, abſtractedly, than ſuch a *ſanction* and ſuch a *declaration?* What ſo conducive to virtuous conduct as the one, ſo productive of ſolid, ſubſtantial peace of mind as the other? The religion that offers both, in connexion with the moſt practical, the moſt popular, the moſt amiable code of morals, that ever was given to the world, may, perhaps, even in an honeſt mind, be unhappily the ſubject of doubt;—but how, in the name of Heaven, can it be an object of *hatred*, unleſs to the moſt depraved taſte, the gloomieſt temper, and the moſt inſenſible heart?

What have been the effects of Chriſtianity upon ſociety? Have they on the fulleſt trial been ſuch as to lead a lover of his country to wiſh for its overthrow? Would any reaſonable man deſire to ſee the enormities of the ancient world brought back again? To ſee parents throwing out their children to periſh—to ſee huſbands caſting off their wives at the impulſe of every momentary caprice—to ſee the moſt unnatural, the moſt beaſtly practices acknowledged without reſerve—nay, made a ſubject for popular verſe by the moſt accompliſhed poets of the age? To what do we owe *our* happier manners—our greater decency in public life, our milder, eaſier, ſweeter intercourſe in private ſociety? To what do we owe the acknowledged ſubordination of our laws to the eternal principles of juſtice and humanity? In fine, to what do we owe that unſeen but moſt powerful influence, which ſilently pervading the maſs, reſtrains the vices and animates the virtues of the great majority—making them good huſbands—good wives—good fathers—good children,—haters of murders—of perjury—of all the groſſer crimes, from the apprehenſion that if they committed ſuch things, the vengeance of Heaven would purſue them? I ſay to what do we owe our undeniable advantages in all theſe reſpects, but to the *Chriſtian Religion?* Nay, is it not evident alſo, that theſe advantages are more perfectly enjoyed in proportion as that religion is left to its own innate purity, without the mixture of ſuperadded dogmas or impoſitions? Yes,—the infidel himſelf acknowledges by his conduct, that in Chriſtianity he cannot find matter for a ſucceſsful attack, and therefore he uniformly confounds with it thoſe ſuperſtitious notions and practices, by which the weakneſs of human nature has concealed (in thinking to add to) its beauty and its excellence. He therefore ſeldom aſſails it as he finds it in the New Teſtament, but rather as it is taught by this or that church. Whatever faults or foibles he can detect, in the creeds or rituals of diſcordant ſects, theſe he eagerly imputes to religion itſelf, and calls upon thoſe who have abuſed it, to renounce it on account of their own abuſes. He does not chuſe to ſee that by this rule, even *Natural Religion* which he affects to reverence ought alſo to be rejected. To *this*, *all* the ſuperſtitions of mankind may be attributed juſt as really as the ſuperſtitions of profeſſing Chriſtians can be imputed to *Chriſtianity*. What the deiſtical unbeliever objects on this ground to our religion, the

Atheiſt

Atheiſt equally objects to his belief of a God, and would have the ſame anſwer to give to *him* that *he* would give to an *Atheiſt*.

But is it on the ground of *utility* only that our Religion is to be defended? Have even its moſt acute or moſt induſtrious opponents been able in a ſingle inſtance to ſhake the ſteadineſs of its *truth*, or to adduce even a plauſible apology for ſuppoſing that its records are not as firmly eſtabliſhed, as hiſtorical teſtimonies can be? If any honeſt doubter of Chriſtianity ſhould happen to caſt his eye on theſe lines, and if, convinced of the *uſefulneſs* of the Chriſtian Religion, he ſhould feel a riſing wiſh to be ſatisfied as to its *verity*, I will not ſend him to the volumes of even the moſt able controverſialiſt—He may doubtleſs peruſe theſe with real advantage—But my earneſt advice to him is, in the firſt inſtance to read with candid, ſerious attention, the *New Teſtament* itſelf—In that wonderful book there are arguments of its own authenticity, which all the unbelievers in the world will never be able to overthrow. The jaundiced eye of prejudice that examines but to find fault will not, can not diſcover *theſe*—But the ingenuous and well-formed mind will perceive in every page the vivid impreſs of ſimple truth, unſuſpecting integrity, firm conviction, boundleſs benevolence—The man of a good heart will feel, every where, the generous glow of a ſpirit like his own—a glow which hypocriſy could not have counterfeited, which a fabrication never could have caught, which nothing ſhort of known, witneſſed, intereſting facts could have inſpired, and nothing but that immortal hope which theſe facts warranted, could have thus formed into a permanent habit—He will ſee that the events deſcribed were ſuch as to exclude the poſſibility of thoſe who relate them being themſelves deceived—and he will equally be convinced that thoſe who *ſo* relate them never could have meant to deceive others—In a word, he will experience a ſort of moral magnetiſm, acting upon his own beſt feeling with a potency of attraction not to be reſiſted.

Will the infidel object to all this, the poſſibility of the accounts not being written by thoſe whoſe names they bear, but by deſigning men in a later period in order to perpetuate an impoſition which had been ſucceſsfully begun—Let the man who ſuſpects this—if he has either knowledge or taſte—if he has either head or heart—read, and judge for himſelf. Let him conſider the character of *Jeſus Chriſt* alone, and then ſay whether it is conceivable that a fancy impregnated by fraud ſhould have thus brought forth the moſt uniform maſterpiece of heroic diſintereſted excellence that ever was exhibited to the world.

The Goſpels in which the actions and diſcourſes of *Jeſus Chriſt* are recorded, are one or other of two things, narrations of facts—or artful fabrications. Let us try the poſſibility of the latter ſuppoſition. Let us picture to ourſelves a cunning impoſtor—ſitting in his ſecret chamber, contriving and executing a plan of elaborate deception. Thus employed, with nothing at heart but groſs impoſition—he conceives ſuch pure, ſuch ſublime, ſuch godlike thoughts, as no philoſopher had ever uttered, no poet had ever been able to furniſh to his favourite hero,—he inculcates a method of worſhipping the Supreme Being, in which all that *Socrates* and *Plato* had thought in earlier, and all that *Cicero had delivered* in later days, on the ſubject of natural religion, is fully realized, and yet infinitely outdone, and he teaches a *charity* to man which tranſcends whatever had been thought of before, as much as the meridian ſunſhine exceeds the dim dawn of the morning. He does this with unexampled warmth—with a fervency of ſentiment and language, ſuch as the heart only can furniſh, as mere labour never reached, and uniformly too—never once ſwerving from the line of benevolence—never ſinking from the height of the ſubject. Such is the ſimple ſtatement of the caſe—I leave it to all that is rational in man, whether there ever was, or *could be* ſuch an impoſtor in the world.

Next to the memorable portrait of our Saviour—let the enquirer after truth pay attention to that of *St. Paul*, as given in the Acts of the Apoſtles, and as deducible from the Epiſtolary writings which bear his name—Where was there more ſtriking originality either of conduct or of compoſition than this extraordinary perſonage exhibits, as a philanthropiſt and a patriot—as a man of matchleſs enterprize and tranſcendant genius—as a combination of great and good qualities—undaunted fortitude—conſummate prudence—unfailing delicacy—ardent affection, whether viewed in his actions or writings,—where, I aſk, is his parallel? Cold is that heart and depraved is that fancy which can contemplate ſuch a picture without aſtoniſhment and veneration—and credulous beyond the common weakneſs of our nature, is that mind which can reſolve it into forgery and fiction. But, if *St. Paul's* character be not fabricated—if thoſe writings which bear his name be not forged—the divinity of our religion follows by infallible conſequence.

Laſtly, while the lover of truth reads the *New Teſtament* and obſerves how the moſt important moral principles are *popularized* in it—how they are fitted to all underſtandings, applied to all ſituations and claſſes—made intereſting to the imagination and penetrating to the heart—how the beſt diſpoſitions are excited—the beſt hopes cheriſhed—the moſt powerful motives applied—let him aſk his own reaſon whether ſuch an invaluable bleſſing to mankind was not in every view what might have been expected from the God of all goodneſs—and whether the imagination can ſuggeſt a more ſuitable plan of carrying it into execution.

L.

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NUMBER LXX.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1796.

Monet annus. HORACE.

MY letter box having failed of producing its uſual ſupply, on Tueſday night laſt I ſat down to bethink me of ſomething for this day's publication. In what form that ſomething ſhould appear puzzled me extremely. If I ſhould attempt to draw characters I dreaded the imputation of perſonality;—ſhould I undertake a ſtory, if it were natural, I feared I might hit on ſome actual fact, and if it were unnatural, I might be accuſed of plagiariſm by ſome of the novel-writers of the day. Grave papers on moral ſubjects I found did not go down ſo well with the public, and lighter papers on manners while the town was thin, and before the winter faſhions were ſettled, would have been unſeaſonable. "It is a long time," ſaid I at laſt, "ſince "I gave the public a viſion, and on next ſaturday a viſion they ſhall have." Satisfied with having thus aſcertained ſo important a particular as the form of my next publication, and determined betimes in the morning to ſet *doggedly*, as *Dr. Johnſon* ſays, about the ſubſtance of it, I went to my bed.

Here I undoubtedly made ſo far progreſs towards a viſion as to be faſt aſleep, when a venerable figure ſeemed to preſent itſelf at my bedſide. It appeared an old man with a frame feeble and emaciated, but with a countenance tranquil and reſigned. His eyes had not loſt their ſpirit of intelligence, and his air indicated experience. "My courſe," ſaid he in faltering accents, "is almoſt run—you ſee before you *the year which is juſt expiring*—"the day of your next publication will be the laſt of my exiſtence. I am "pleaſed with your countrymen, and mean to convey to them ſome of the "benefits of my obſervation.—I am pleaſed," he was kind enough to ſay, "with the uſeful tendency of your work, and will make it the medium of "my communication? I know the nature of your plan precludes political "reflections, and therefore I ſhall not advert to the operations of the cam-"paign or the death of the Empreſs of *Ruſſia*, nor ſhall I make any com-"ment on the ſpirit of your nation which has arrayed itſelf againſt foreign "and domeſtic foes. This note-book—I am too weak to give it in more "correct form—contains ſome particulars of my hiſtory ſketched out, with "ſome remarks ſolely on ordinary life—it does not touch on the local man-"ners of any country except your own—Take and tranſcribe with fidelity-" On ſaying this he, with much affability, handed me a pocket-book, which I received with the moſt grateful reſpect. The contents, as well as I could make them out, were as follows:

CONFESSIONS *and* REMARKS *of* A. D. 1796.

" I was weak enough to be flattered with the reception which I met with " at my firſt appearance—the feſtivity with which I was uſhered in, and the " mutual congratulations of friends on my arrival. I had not then learned " that forms of ſalutation were not any where to be underſtood literally, and " that, with your countrymen in particular, any occurrence was eaſily con- " verted into an occaſion of feſtivity. Some expected from me a new order " of things—ſome looked to me to execute what they themſelves only were " competent to—they were diſappointed to find, that every thing went on " as before, and I was mortified to learn that I was indebted ſolely to novelty " for the attention which had been paid me—a little experience ſoon taught " me not to miſtake conviviality for friendſhip, nor to believe any affection " laſting for which no reaſon can be aſſigned.

" I was not a little proud of my family when I learned, that in a direct " line four thouſand (ſome fooliſh people pretended twenty thouſand) of " my anceſtors could be traced. But I was effectually cured of my pride " (and ſo might others if they would apply the ſame remedy) by looking a " little into their family hiſtory. Of ſeveral of them nothing could be ſaid, " but that they had exiſted—they were recorded only on the coins which " they had iſſued—they were mere links in a chain, connecting ſuch as were " more diſtinguiſhed: and even theſe owed all their diſtinction to ſome " peſtilence or ſome battle—to the birth of an infant or the appearance of a " comet—in ſhort, to ſome natural event which they could neither produce " nor hinder, or ſome moral cauſe to be traced out only in miſery and devaſ- " tation.

" When I attempted to inſtitute a compariſon between myſelf and my " anceſtors, 'twas vexatious to ſee ſo many affecting to deſpiſe my attain- " ments, merely becauſe I was preſent and endeavouring to ſhew, that the " balance of every eſtimable quality was in favour of thoſe who had been " abſent ſo long, that the degree in which they poſſeſſed the qualities which " are truly eſtimable, could not with any certainty be known. I wiſh they " would ſet about finding out ſomething uſeful themſelves, inſtead of find- " ing fault with thoſe who do, or puzzling themſelves to find out how much " has been found out before. If I with my immediate predeceſſors have not " done a great deal towards advancing ſcience, we certainly have done much " towards giving it extenſive circulation. Our remote anceſtors may boaſt " of ſome few names of great eminence, and ſome of the ornamental arts " brought to high perfection; we boaſt of knowledge more extenſively dif- " fuſed and the comforts of human life ſupplied more abundantly. The " ſtate of human ſociety is by us conſiderably improved, and in point of " morals—but I do not ſay we are a whit better than we ought to be.

" No perſon is to be conſidered an impartial judge in his own caſe. How " then can my character be fairly eſtimated?—for the opinions of others " concerning me would be found extremely inconſiſtent and unſatisfactory.

" What

" What different accounts would be given of me by different claſſes, by " lawyers and lovers, by ſoldiers and merchants, by farmers and courtiers, " by authors and bailiffs? Is it poſſible they could agree in anſwering even " the ſimple queſtion, whether I was good or bad? Not only would each " claſs differ from every other, but individuals of the very ſame claſs would " frequently be met with of diametrically oppoſite opinions. The lover who " was diſcarded would be in a very different humour from him who got the " wife and the fortune; and the officer who was forced to retire on half pay " with a wooden leg, would ſpeak very differently from him who had ſuc- " ceeded to the commiſſion which had been vacated.

" My only appeal for a character muſt therefore lie with *Prince Poſterity*. " I have indeed been treated with the moſt cruel ingratitude by the preſent " generation. Thoſe very perſons, whom I mentioned as deſpiſing my at- " tainments, were really perſons who owed their reputation for learning " wholly to my indulgence, for I am confident that in times paſt they never " would have been accounted learned, and I do not imagine that their names " will ever reach to futurity. The happineſs which I conferred was almoſt " always forgotten (but in this my caſe is not ſingular) while I was forced to " ſuſtain the moſt bitter reproaches from thoſe who, without any foundation, " thought proper to lay their miſery at my door. The gameſter who was " ruined I often heard curſing me, but him whom I helped to make his " fortune I ſeldom found at his prayers. The merchant who, encouraged " by the ſucceſs which I gave him in a judicious ſpeculation, was led on by " avarice and imprudence to loſe his all in ventures of exceſſive hazard, ne- " ver ſpoke of me but as the cauſe of his ruin. The couple who, joined " by me in the bands of Hymen, celebrated my praiſes in extatic rapture, " I not unfrequently found after a ſhort interval agreeing only to execrate " the odious *Year* which united them. When Miſs ———," then followed a number of particular inſtances confirming the general deſcriptions juſt laid down, which my regard for the peace of many families and reſpect for the characters of individuals would make it improper for me to give to the public. The experienced reader will not think ſuch proofs at all neceſſary.

The remarks after a few pages becoming again general I proceeded in my tranſcribing. " The ill treatment," it went on, " which I ſo often received " from the world ſometimes made me a little peeviſh and ſplenetic. When " in theſe moods, I took pleaſure in bringing things to light which ſome of " the parties wiſhed to have concealed, ſuch as aſſignations and private mar- " riages, the ages of young ladies and the artifices of legacy-hunters. I " particularly delighted in diſappointing the unfounded conjectures of ſome " who wiſhed to acquire a character for extraordinary ſagacity by attempt- " ing predictions of what was to happen. Yet after all I have ſome reaſon " to conſider myſelf a favourite with the world—at leaſt, *for the time being*. " To many, it is true, I was unfortunately fatal, but then there were many " who ſeemed to live wholly for me without any regard either to paſt or fu-

" ture:

" ture : and though ſome perſons might at times have deſired to haſten my " ſpeed, yet all I believe are ſorry that I am gone paſt.

" I went on in my courſe at a ſteady and uniform rate. At firſt I took a " good deal of trouble in clearing off the arrear of buſineſs which my pre- " deceſſor in his latter days ſuffered to accumulate. I thought myſelf con- " cerned to ſee due honour paid to his pecuniary engagements, and there " were many lovers vows and courtiers promiſes for which he made me reſ- " ponſible. This I complained of as an hardſhip, yet—I do not know how " it happens—but I fear I am leaving as great an arrear on my ſucceſſor. " He will find however, as I did, that it is not uncommon to practiſe yourſelf " what you condemn in others—beſides, after you publiſh this, he may con- " ſider much of the buſineſs that I leave thus to him as ſo many bills in par- " liament adjourned to the *firſt of Auguſt*. Several of thoſe vows and pro- " miſes he need never expect to ſee performed.

" As to morals and manners," he was now come to my ſubject, I began " to feel particularly intereſted—" though I made ſome efforts to improve " them, I cannot ſay that I left them much better than I found them. Re- " ligion I ſeldom heard of except at church—decorum was too mean a prin- " ciple for the high, and too high a principle for the mean. Of honour, I " mean duelling, I had not much—the men who loved fighting had ſufficient " employment in the war. This brought chaſtity alſo rather above par. " Dreſs was the great topic and ſcience of my time. Frugal wives, when " they ceaſed to have *waiſts*, gave up their boddices, I think they call them, " to make *pantaloons* for their huſbands, not without ſome hopes that while " the huſbands wore pantaloons, they might aſſume *the breeches*. Though " they were worn univerſally I can't ſay I ever thought them becoming to " any man under the height of five feet, or whoſe weight exceeded nineteen " ſtone. But abſurdities in dreſs reſt with thoſe who adopt them. I was " never well pleaſed to ſee a gentleman reſemble a groom, and much leſs to " ſee a lady dreſſed like a coachman.

" As to books—excepting ſome ſingularly fantaſtic and indecent novels, " and the ordinary run of occaſional pamphlets, few were written in my " time—but then many ſplendid editions were printed with fine engravings, " wide lines, and ſpacious margins. Theſe indeed are ſo much in eſteem, " that the time may not perhaps be far diſtant when the book will be all " margin. With me indeed a periodical publication was begun, where there " never had been one before—In Ireland the Flapper.—" Think, reader, what did I feel at that moment! To have my little effort noticed in a record of ſuch ineſtimable value! I leaped up in an extacy—but alas! I was now awake—my viſion was at end, and I was left to make out from my recollection what I fondly thought I had tranſcribed from documents the moſt authentic and impreſſive.

F.

The Flapper.

NUMBER LXXI.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 6, 1797.

——————— As free, as debonair, unarm'd,
As bending Angels—that's their fame in peace—
But when they would ſeem ſoldiers, they have galls,
Good arms, ſtrong joints, true ſwords.———————

SHAKESPEAR. *Troil. and Creſs.*

IT is now almoſt a fortnight ſince the firſt alarm of an actual attempt has been made by our enemies, to invade *Ireland*; and ever ſince, the public mind has been fully occupied by the intelligence perpetually arriving from the coaſt, and by the preparations for defence that ring throughout the interior of the kingdom.—And how, in ſuch times, can the public mind be better occupied? Old as I am, and of habits and diſpoſitions as gentle and pacific as the office which I have aſſumed, I can feel within my own breaſt a ſpark of the ſame generous enthuſiaſm which glows among my younger countrymen; and I ſhould bluſh to acknowledge a cold and phlegmatic philoſophy, that could freeze up the mind in inert ſpeculation, when the times call for warmth and activity, or chain a man down in lifeleſs abſtraction, when his country demands him as a ſoldier. For my own part, were it not for an invincible bend of the ſhoulders, and a villainous gout that hovers about me, watching his opportunity, I do not think ſixty ſo very advanced an age; and I have ſerious thoughts—but alas! my inveterate tormentor ſtops ſhort at once the whole train of martial ideas that were riſing in my mind, and warns me by an unmerciful twinge of the great toe, that my plans of defence muſt be confined to *his* attacks, and that I can aſſiſt the gallant men who are employed in the protection of their native land, only by my counſel, my prayers and good wiſhes. Confined therefore by neceſſity, to the exerciſe of my official weapon, it at leaſt, as far as its nature will admit, ſhall be employed in the cauſe. Not that I hope to emulate the ancient poet, and to rouſe by my writings my fellow-citizens to arms—my brave fellow-citizens require no new incitement.—Did *Tyrtæus* live at this day and in this country, he would find the effects of his ſtrains anticipated, and inſtead of the courage that could be elevated or depreſſed by the cadences of a ſong, would witneſs a valour ſteady as the reaſon that guides it, and generous as the principle that gives it birth.—Nor do I propoſe to give a lecture on the manual exerciſe, or to add one to the ſeveral treatiſes on military tactics that cover our booktellers' counters, and outſtrip even the Flapper in demand: inſtructions of this nature I leave to perſons better qualified to give it, and I chearfully accept on the occaſion the aſſiſtance of my worthy fellow-flappers, the drill ſergeant, the drum and the bugle-horn. What I propoſe in the preſent paper is merely to communicate what has occurred to me on the *moral effects* that may ariſe from the preſent ſtate of our domeſtic politics.—Such a ſubject is not beyond my province. It is one of thoſe few on which I hope I may be allowed to detain my male readers for a moment from the

parade, or to draw the attention of my fair friends from the laudable work on which I am ſure they are all engaged, of making flannel waiſtcoats for our gallant ſoldiers.

I am acquainted with an old gentleman, who, though a very worthy man in other reſpects, has the foible of affecting a difference of opinion from every body elſe: his zeal for ſingularity, it is true, often betrays him into abſurdity and paradox, but he maintains his ground with ſuch reſolution and ſteadineſs, and is withal ſo calm and good tempered, that between thoſe of his hearers who cannot, and thoſe who will not, controvert them, his dogmas uſually are received with apparent acquieſcence.—I was in his company a few evenings ago—the converſation turned upon the ſtate of the kingdom, and the precautions that had been uſed for its defence, amongſt which every body appeared to agree in thinking the volunteer armament one of the moſt efficacious—"Well," exclaimed my friend, "I differ from you all—I am "of opinion that the volunteer inſtitution will prove the ruin of *Ireland*." Thoſe of the company who were not acquainted with the character of the man, were a good deal ſurpriſed at this aſſertion—the firm tone in which it was expreſſed excited all their attention, and every eye was fixed on my friend, who perceiving that his firſt ſtroke had taken effect, prepared to follow it up, and raiſing himſelf forward, reſting his elbows on the arms of his chair, and throwing a glance quite round the room, repeated in a tone more loud, more magiſterial and more deciſive—"I ſay—the ruin of *Ireland*."—I ſhould have remained in ſilence and ſuffered the old man to have enjoyed his triumph as uſual without oppoſition; but obſerving a young fellow in a black ſtock about to enter the liſts, I thought it beſt to anticipate him,—"And on what ground, my good friend, do you think ſo?" The queſtion, I could perceive, diſcompoſed him—he was not prepared to anſwer it, becauſe in fact, he was not prepared with arguments to ſupport his opinions, or rather had no opinion on the ſubject: having advanced a poſition on which he had never reflected even for a moment, merely to gratify his paſſion for ſingularity.—However he was now *committed* (to uſe a new phraſe) and an eſcape was impracticable: he therefore prepared for engagement, and like a prudent general, abandoned a part of his ground, that he might conſolidate his force for the defence of the remainder.—"I do not mean to aſſert," ſaid he, "that theſe aſſociations, in their immediate effects, will prove injurious—"far from it—I confide as firmly as any body, in that ſpirit and patrio-"tiſm, for our preſervation from an inſolent enemy. It is to their remote "conſequences that I look with apprehenſion:—I ſee in them a mixture and "ſolution of character, of rank, of profeſſion: the boundaries which ought "in every eſtabliſhed ſociety to be carefully maintained between the ſeveral "claſſes that compoſe it, I ſee in danger of being ſwept away; and the occu-"pation of arms, to which the *Iriſh* nation has a ſtrong natural propenſity, "I ſee too likely to take poſſeſſion of the minds of all our youth, excluding "every other conſideration, and melting down into itſelf all the peaceful "arts, all the liberal and all the learned profeſſions, by the exerciſe of which "we were riſing ſo quickly to pre-eminence.—So eaſily do military habits "aſſimilate themſelves to the *Iriſh* genius, that inſtances are now before us "of ſteady ſoldiers, formed, as it were in a moment, from the youngeſt and "moſt volatile parts of ſociety—ſilence and ſubmiſſion are obſerved for "hours together by men whoſe habits are argumentation, and whoſe profeſ-"ſion is words, and even the miniſters of litigation are in the daily practice "of ſubordination and obedience the moſt paſſive. How difficult will it "be to unlearn theſe habits of military diſcipline, to the forming of which "the taſte as well as the ſpirit of the people ſo powerfully incline—and yet

"they

" they muſt be unlearned before we can reſume our courſe of national proſ-
" perity—a nation of ſoldiers never was wealthy :—it may render itſelf for-
" midable abroad, but that diſtinction will too ſurely be purchaſed by po-
" verty and wretchedneſs at home."

The old gentleman was ſilent, and the company looked to me for an anſwer : but I was unwilling to deſtroy the ſatisfaction which he viſibly enjoyed in having maintained his point with more plauſibility than either himſelf or any body elſe had expected. However, he had not changed my opinion, and the more I reflected on the ſubject, after I returned home, the more ſtrongly was I convinced that even in its remoteſt effects, the eſtabliſhment would be attended with good. " It is true," thought I, " as my " friend obſerved, the times have produced a temporary diſſolution of ſome " of the chief diſtinctions of ſociety—The peaceful arts, it is certain, raiſe " not their voice amidſt the clang of arms—the learned and liberal profeſ-" ſions are forſaken by their adopted ſons—commerce and agriculture " equally bend before the genius of war, and the venerable ſeat of literature " itſelf, pours forth a numerous band of youthful heroes—all diſtinctions " are loſt in the common garb and common occupation of warfare. But " why ſhould I ſo far miſtruſt the good ſenſe of my countrymen as to ſup-" poſe theſe habits will be invincible? The ſame wiſdom in our rulers, the " ſame patriotiſm in the people that called forth the martial ſpirit into ef-" fect, will be able to controul it, when the impending danger ſhall have " paſſed over, and the public good again ſummons to the exerciſe of peace-" ful occupations—Yes—when the valour of *Iriſhmen* ſhall have tamed 'the ' ſavage ſpirit of wild war'—ſhall have intimidated or chaſtiſed the haughty " foe, each ſoldier ſhall return home, and apply to domeſtic uſe the valu-" able inſtructions which his military experience has afforded.—From that " experience he may exemplify in himſelf and inculcate upon his children, " the benefits of good order, method and punctuality—the advantage of mu-" tual ſupport and co-operation—the duty of obedience to lawful authority, " and the neceſſity of attention, each to his own conduct, and to his proper " ſituation and diſtance in the ranks of life.—From that experience, above " all, he will learn that every man has a real and a valuable intereſt in the " lives of all his fellow-ſubjects—and while, as the ſoldiers of their country, " each freely proffers that life in the cauſe of mutual protection, he will learn " to view with deteſtation, as a crime againſt his country no leſs than his " religion, the practice that upon the ſlighteſt provocation, points towards " the heart of a friend and a fellow-ſoldier, the ſword that ſhould be drawn " only againſt the common enemy."

I have enlarged upon the valour of my countrymen—let the following letter, juſt received, ſpeak the ſpirit of my country-*women* :

Merrion-Square, Friday Evening.

My Dear Flapper,

I have a charming plan for the defence of our poor dear government againſt theſe ſlovenly unpowdered *French*, and I want nothing but your aſ-ſiſtance to bring the thing into vogue, and to be gazetted without delay.—My dear F. I drive a gig to a miracle—ſure you muſt have ſeen me in *Dame-ſtreet*, in an helmet cap, my coachman's whip and box-coat—nice bays—four in hand—full gallop—You can't but have ſeen me—Well then, dear crea-ture, my plan is to form a corps of *Loyal Yeo-Women Charioteers* for the de-fence of *Ireland*. My brother tells me that he thinks he has read at College

or ſome ſuch place, how the ancients uſed to fight in chariots, or as he ſays the word ſhould be tranſlated, gigs or curricles: I cannot but think that a troop of *us* would do great execution; as to the other ſex, every man of ſpirit is already enrolled among the cavalry or infantry—thoſe who are not, I am ſure would diſgrace *our* ranks, and therefore I would admit none but ladies. Then we are to have ſharp ſcythes fixed to the ends of our axletrees! That, I underſtand, was the faſhion in thoſe old times—how delightful! Only imagine, dear Flap. how we ſhould mow down whole ranks of Frenchmen—what havock we ſhould make amongſt a mob in a narrow ſtreet—or how effectually we ſhould clear the lines on a review.—I have heard of a nation called Amazons, that was entirely women—(how could that be, Flapper?) I don't think I ſhould have liked to have lived among them—men are horrid plagues to be ſure, but they are uſeful domeſtic animals notwithſtanding—beſides, thoſe Amazons had ſome very queer faſhions, that I never could ſee any reaſon for: for when archery was the *ton* two or three years ago, I was as good a ſhot as the beſt Amazon among them—Well then, I propoſe to arm my corps with bows and arrows—I do not like the ſmell of gun-powder, and one is ſo dirtied after firing, one is not fit to be ſeen: and if one were taken priſoner, you know, Flapper, one would wiſh to appear decent at leaſt.

I have an exquiſite plan for our dreſs too, taken from an old picture—you are a dear little *old* creature, and ſo if you will call at No.———*Merrion-Square*, and aſk for my waiting woman, ſhe will convey you up the back-ſtairs to my dreſſing-room, where you may ſee the pattern ſuit.—Knock gently however, for huſbands, you know———As to my name, refer your readers for it to next Saturday's Gazette; in the mean time my brother tells me, I ought to ſubſcribe myſelf,

Your's, Dear F.

THALESTRIS.

A.

DUBLIN:

Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.

[Price, Two Pence.]

The Editor will thankfully receive from the Friends of Literature, any communications they may favour him with on the ſubjects appropriated to the nature of this publication.

Perſons deſirous of having this paper ſent to the country, are requeſted to apply to the Clerks of the Roads at the General Poſt-Office.

[A Letter-Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER LXXII.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 14, 1797.

———*Animum picturâ paſcit inani.*

VIRG.

He feeds his mind on *a vain picture.*

HAVING lately happened to be in a company, in which the quantity of *rouge* imported into this Kingdom became the ſubject of converſation, and feeling myſelf particularly intereſted in every thing relating to the fair ſex, I was led to make ſome reflections on that method of embelliſhing the natural beauty of my country-women. And I am the more inclined to give theſe my reflections to the Public, ſince I have learned upon inquiry that the practice is not infrequent. The extent to which I found the faſhion of thus improving upon nature to prevail, aſtoniſhed me. I was informed that there is ſcarcely a Haberdaſher's ſhop in a country-town, in which a conſiderable quantity of *pink-ribband* and *hungary-water* is not diſpoſed of among the belles of thoſe ruſtick circles; nay, I have been aſſured, that the florid bluſh exhibited at a country fair is not always the gift of nature.

It is not my intention to addreſs my obſervations to that claſs of the fair, who find it expedient to lay on ſuch an extraordinary tint, as may ſerve the purpoſe of a trader's advertiſement. With them the practice does not affect imitation, and cannot be accuſed as artifice. It is, on the contrary, a natural and expreſſive intimation, that they make no pretenſions to ſimplicity and purity, and that their favour is as venal as their complexions.

Neither do I propoſe to remonſtrate with thoſe conſummate practitioners, who carry their operations beyond the precincts of the cheek, and whoſe modeſty induces them to retire altogether from the eye of mankind. To perſons of ſo much modeſty it may be unavailing to mention, that one of my

countrymen has already remarked, that this compleat incruſtation is extremely offenſive to *the taſte:* and thoſe, who have made ſo great proficiency in this branch of the fine arts, will ſcarcely be influenced by my arguments to abandon the practice.

Leaving then the traders to advertiſe their occupation, and the ſilk-worms of the ſex to envelope themſelves in cruſts of their own formation, let me addreſs myſelf to thoſe novices, whoſe ſole motive is the hope of appearing more amiable in the eyes of the other ſex, and who content themſelves with the application of a ſingle colour.

The practice of painting the human figure is of very remote antiquity, and, if we may judge from the original inhabitants of the weſtern continent, coeval with ſavage life. This latter conſideration is not indeed very flattering to the civilized practitioners of the art; and it will probably be thought that there is a material difference between the two caſes, ſince, while the European fine lady employs the aſſiſtance of *rouge*, that ſhe may appear to her admirers as amiable as poſſible, the Indian lays on his hideous variety of colours to ſtrike terror into the hearts of his enemies. But however different the motives may be, the event is ſometimes the ſame; for I have known a young man, who had been on the point of making a propoſal of marriage, as effectually *deterred* from proceeding, by a diſcovery of the artificial nature of his miſtreſs's complexion, as a Cherokee might be from encountering his painted antagoniſt.

Among ſavage nations the practice ſeems alſo to be authorized by conſiderations, which are not of the ſame urgency in civilized life. No ſociety has yet I believe been diſcovered, in which there have not been introduced ſome external marks of diſtinction; and where the infinite varieties of diſcrimination, to be found in the expenſive gradations of European finery, do not prevail, an additional ſtreak of yellow or blue may ſerve to repel the intruſions of preſuming inferiors. This notion, that certain coloured powders daubed upon the body, ſhould be conſidered as a ſubſtitute for cloathing in diſtinguiſhing the various ranks of ſociety, ſeems to have been tranſmitted even to our days from our painted anceſtors of the barbarous ages. There are ſtill perſons, who never think of counterfeiting the bluſh of roſy health, but lay on their rouge, as they wear the great hoops of the laſt century; and are content to ſacrifice at the altar of ancient cuſtom whatever is intereſting to a natural taſte.

Even they, who have recourſe to art merely to improve thoſe charms which nature has beſtowed, commonly juſtify the artifice by its analogy to dreſs. If it be reaſonable, thoſe fair reaſoners contend, to decorate by all the charms

of

of dreſs the natural proportions of the human figure; it cannot be improper by a ſimilar artifice to heighten the natural tints of the complexion. The argument I confeſs has conſiderable weight; and when I hear it from the lips of a pretty woman, it ſeldom fails to appear wholly unanſwerable. But now, ſitting coolly in my ſtudy, and meditating diſpaſſionately on the welfare of my fair wards, I think I can point out preciſely the circumſtance in which its fallacy conſiſts. In ſhort, the word *artifice* ſeems to me to contain the grand difference between the two caſes. The dreſs is never miſtaken for the perſon which it covers. The moſt ſuperficial obſerver is not in danger of ſuppoſing that the graceful flow of a petticoat is a well turned ancle, or a very elegant head-dreſs is a beautiful head of hair. The decorations of dreſs may be highly ornamental on the ſtricteſt principles of good taſte, but ſtill they are diſtinct parts, which contribute to the collective beauty of the whole. With painting it is otherwiſe. Thoſe, who practiſe it truly as an imitative art, do not intend that it ſhould be regarded as an avowed appendage of dreſs, but as the gift of nature. It may poſſibly in a few inſtances, when exquiſitely performed, really improve the natural beauty of the countenance; but it is in all an artifice.

This conſideration is perhaps ſufficient to warrant its prohibition. The moſt attractive character of the female ſex is ingenuous ſimplicity. Man, whoſe lot it is to buſtle in the buſy world; to ſtruggle for ſubſiſtence and independence, if he be poor, and for concerns of a more general importance, if he be rich; man cannot poſſeſs that engaging ſimplicity, which is compatible with the ſecluſion of female life. Whatever practice, therefore, however indifferent in itſelf, introduces habitual artifice into the female character, counteracts the original deſtination of the ſex, and unfits them for the part they were deſigned to perform. It diſqualifies them for being the domeſtic ſolace of the diſquiet of more general ſociety, for being the patient formers of the infant mind.

But if we go ſtill farther, and reflect on the object of this artifice, it will appear ſtill more inadmiſſible. Admiration is that object. Let me not be underſtood to mean, that the deſire of admiration ſhould be entirely baniſhed from the female heart. That being who gave ſuch winning ſoftneſs to the diſpoſition, and ſuch attractive beauty to the exterior of the one ſex, could not have deſigned that they ſhould be inſenſible to the admiration which theſe qualities neceſſarily excite in the other. But as a moderate deſire of male admiration is a natural ſpring of that ſocial machine, which mankind conſtitute by the appointment of Providence; the ſame deſire, when carried to exceſs, tends to throw the whole into diſorder. Whatever may be the opinion of ſuch of my fair readers, as have not yet felt the perpetual repetition

of

of balls and aſſemblies tireſome, to be good wives and good mothers is their grand deſtination. It is thus only, that in general they can conciliate the real eſteem of others, or indulge the genuine feelings and propenſities of their own hearts. As far as the deſire of admiration can be reconciled with a diſpoſition accommodated to this natural deſtination of the ſex, it heightens the charm of ſocial intercourſe, and gives a grace to thoſe domeſtic virtues, which form ſo large a proportion of the happineſs of life. The important point then is, to ſhew how far this deſire may be gratified conſiſtently with what is truly amiable in the female character, and where it ſhould be repreſſed as incompatible with its duties.

It is perhaps fortunate for us that we can ſeldom aſcertain with accuracy the preciſe limits of our duties, as we ſhould be tempted to acquieſce indolently in the obſervance of the leaſt irkſome that ſhould be required in our ſituation. But, however difficult it may be to draw the line which ſhall form the boundary of right and wrong, few inſtances can occur, of which we ſhall not be able to pronounce, on which ſide of that boundary they ought to be placed. Of theſe I conceive this buſineſs of painting is not one. It propoſes to excite admiration by the affected diſplay of a charm not naturally belonging to her who adopts it. It is ſo far correſponding to the adventitious ornaments of dreſs, as that I would rank in the ſame claſs of immoderate lovers of admiration the lady who ſhould exhibit an artificial complexion as her own, and her, who ſhould decorate her perſon with ornaments more expenſive than ſuited her fortune and ſituation. Each would diſplay, though in different ways, the ſame inordinate wiſh to be admired. The one would indulge it by artfully counterfeiting what had been denied by nature; the other by extravagantly procuring what prudence would have forbidden: while each would be tempted to neglect the endearing duties of domeſtic life, for the pleaſure of exciting the ſtranger's caſual admiration of her beauty or her elegance.

E.

DUBLIN:
Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.
[Price, Two Pence.]

The Editor will thankfully receive from the Friends of Literature, any communications they may favour him with on the ſubjects appropriated to the nature of this publication.

Perſons deſirous of having this paper ſent to the country, are requeſted to apply to the Clerks of the Roads at the General Poſt-Office.
[A Letter-Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER LXXIII.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 21, 1797.

Dat veniam corvis, vexat cenſura columbas.

JUVENAL.

See ſimple TRUTH aſſail'd with taunts ſevere,
While *Affidavit-men* in ſafety ſneer.

TO THE FLAPPER.

SIR,

FOR the laſt ſeventeen years of my life, I have reſided in a remote part of this kingdom, occupied in the management of an eſtate, which, ſmall as it is, has deſcended lineally to me from my great grandfather, and will, I hope, deſcend to my lateſt poſterity without burden or diminution. In my attention to it I find health and amuſement, and during the period I have mentioned, I never was ten miles from my own houſe, except at the laſt election, when I went to poll for my neighbour Colonel *Touchwell*, and about two years ago when my eldeſt daughter was introduced into life at our aſſize ball, on which occaſion my wife made a point of my attendance.

Thus ſituated, you may be ſure that a ſummons to Dublin, and in the month of November too, was by no means welcome: yet the occaſion was of ſuch a nature as left me no poſſibility of declining. I will tell you how it was.—A couſin of mine had been obliged to go to law for an eſtate, very unjuſtly withheld from him by a more remote relation, who, taking advantage of his abſence, had wormed himſelf into poſſeſſion. It was neceſſary towards making out his caſe, as they call it, to prove that my great Uncle and Aunt had lived together as man and wife: and to be ſure nobody was better qualified to give evidence to that point than myſelf, as I had been bred up almoſt from infancy in the family of the worthy old couple. Accordingly, when the time of the trial (which was to be in Dublin) drew near, I received from my Couſin two or three very preſſing letters; and even his Attorney, a Gentleman whom I had not the pleaſure of knowing, was ſo kind as to write, aſſuring me in very handſome terms, that my attendance and countenance, as he was pleaſed to ſay, were alone wanting to ſecure his client's ſucceſs—Thus ſolicited, was it poſſible for me, Mr. Flapper, to refuſe? Not that I would have ſtirred one ſtep, if I had not thought that my Couſin had right on his ſide: for indeed, though his caſe, when clearly ſtated according to law, filled ſeveral folio ſheets, I think the only queſtion in it was, whether he was his Grand-mother's genuine Grand-ſon: and to that fact, for the reaſons I have mentioned, I held myſelf no incompetent witneſs.

Well, Sir, I arrived in Town the night before the appointed time, and proceeded the next morning to the Four Courts, under convoy of a Clerk of my Friend's Attorney, who civilly warned me, as I entered, to take off my hat and guard my pockets, and by whoſe exertions I was ſoon fixed in a commodious ſeat. Buſineſs now commenced, and the Jury being ſworn, my Couſin's Counſel proceeded to inform them of the nature of his client's caſe, telling them with great eloquence and energy, and in a ſpeech of more than an hour's length, pretty much to the ſame effect of what I have already ſtated in ſubſtance, namely, that he was his grandmother's genuine grandſon. When he had finiſhed, the witneſſes were called, and I was amongſt the foremoſt. It has always been my misfortune, Mr. Flapper, to be ſubject to an unconquerable embarraſſment (my poor dear Aunt uſed to call it ſheepiſhneſs) which ſeizes me whenever I am to make a public appearance: and when I tell you beſides, that ſometimes I am tormented with an impediment in my ſpeech, at the very time uſually, when I am moſt anxious to deliver myſelf handſomely, you will, I am ſure, feel for the ſituation of my mind as I aſcended the table. My alarm was much diſſipated however by the politeneſs of the Gentleman who firſt examined me: with the greateſt affability he cautioned me to be cool and collected, and then proceeded to interrogate me: he aſked me briefly my name, the nature of my connection with his client's family, the period of my reſidence in the houſe of my Great Uncle,—and led me in ſhort into a detail, from which I thought it muſt have appeared plain to every body in Court, who believed me (and I was on my oath) that my Couſin was in good truth and fact his Grandmother's Grandſon. Thus far every thing went well, and when the Gentleman (who had received all I ſaid with great reſpect) told me he had no more queſtions to aſk me, I turned to go away, inwardly rejoicing in having ſecured my Couſin's cauſe, and come off ſo reſpectably myſelf. Little was I aware of what the next moment was to produce—little did I expect to receive ſuch treatment at the hands of a Gentleman whom I had never before ſeen and never could have offended——I was quitting the table, as I told you, and had almoſt regained my ſeat, when my attention was attracted by a loud "halloo" from a coarſe voice at the other ſide of the Court: I did not at firſt dream of this being addreſſed to me, and was ſtill retiring towards my place, when the "halloo" repeated in a louder and coarſer tone, with the addition of "you, Mr. What's your name—d'ye hear?" induced me to turn round, and I then diſcovered, to my utter aſtoniſhment, that it was *to me* that this harſh ſummons was directed, from another Gentleman in a profeſſional garb whom I had not before noticed, but who now by various geſticulations ſeemed to demand my attention——As I was not prepoſſeſſed either with his appearance or his mode of invitation, I made another motion to retreat, but was then told by the courteous Gentleman who had already queſtioned me, that I muſt ſubmit to ſome further examination. I had already told "the whole truth," as my oath obliged me, and could not ſee the neceſſity for further enquiry: but as my friend adviſed me, I thought it beſt to acquieſce. But how ſhall I deſcribe to you, Mr. Flapper, the ſcene that enſued for a full half hour, during which this ſtrange Gentleman interrogated me ſharply as to what I had already ſaid, (for he had ſlily taken every word down in writing, for the very purpoſe—It would be impoſſible to convey to any perſon who was not preſent, an adequate idea of the effect which his geſtures, his tones,

his

his ſhrugs and his inſinuations produced upon the by-ſtanders and even upon myſelf—I had ſworn to a plain matter of fact, of which I was as certain as of my own exiſtence—yet ſo did this ingenious Gentleman torture my phraſes, ſo perverſe was he in miſunderſtanding, or ſo ſubtle in miſrepreſenting my meaning, that between my vexation, my baſhfulneſs, and the villainous ſtammer that had now almoſt tongue-tied me, the darkneſs and confuſion which he had laboured to throw over my evidence, ſeemed to take poſſeſſion of my mind alſo, and I know not whether I could at that moment without heſitation have ſworn either that my name was *Simon Plainright*, that the Plaintiff was my Couſin, or even his own Grandmother's Grandſon. But, as the beſt method to ſhew the ſtyle of his croſs-examination, I ſhall endeavour to recollect for you a part of the concluſion of it: indeed I am ſure I ſhall never entirely forget it.

Q. "Well, Sir, and ſo you ſay that you reſided at your Uncle's."

A. "My Grand Uncle's, Sir."

Q. "Uncle or Grand Uncle—ſure 'tis the ſame thing—you are ſo "mighty preciſe—Gentlemen of the Jury, I don't like this affectation of "preciſeneſs in trifles.—You ſay, Mr.——— that you reſided there from "your *infancy*—pleaſe to tell the Court and Jury the exact period—for *in-* "*fancy*, you know, Gentlemen, is a very *long term* with *ſome people*"—(here a "wink from the Counſel, and a laugh among the audience.)

A. "Sir, I believe I was not more than three years of age when my fa- "ther died, and"—

Q. "Three years! and ſo you come here to ſwear to facts that came to "your knowledge at three years of age?"

A. "Pardon me, Sir,—I lived ſeveral years in the family, and was"—

Q. "Pray, Sir, no interruptions, I deſire—I aſk you now, Sir, and remember "you are on your oath—can you take on you to ſwear that the good couple "we were ſpeaking of, were ever married?"

A. "Sir, I can ſwear that they always lived together and were conſidered "by every body as man and wife."

Q. "Now, Sir, is that an anſwer to my queſtion?——you muſt and you "ſhall tell the truth—let me tell you, Sir, ſuch equivocation will not go "down with that Jury."

A. "Sir, I ſcorn (here my utterance was quite ſtopped.)"

Q. "So then, your evidence is no more than this, that the old lady your "Aunt, as you call her, lived on pretty intimate terms with the old gentle- "man your Uncle—but whether as wife, as houſe-keeper, or as———" (here the Gentleman winked and ſhrugged his ſhoulders 'till he made every- body laugh, and then called out with an air of triumph) "you may go home, "friend."

With the moſt painful emotions of anger, indignation and ſhame, I hur- ried from a place where every eye, I thought, was turned towards me with looks of contempt or abhorrence. My Couſin entreated that I would wait the event of the trial, but in vain—I made the beſt of my way to my lodg- ing, and fell into a reflection on the occurrences of the day—"And what "offence" exclaimed I, "have I committed, that I ſhould thus be driven "with ignominy from the public juſtice-ſeat of my country, and ſkulk like a "guilty thing from the ſociety of men? In obedience to the call not leſs of "friendſhip than of duty, I quitted my dear home, and incurred expence "and trouble in the vindication of what I *knew* was the right.—

"Did

" Did I deſerve to be brow-beaten and inſulted—to have my veracity " queſtioned in the face of my country, my perſonal defects drawn " forth and expoſed to the deriſion of a mob, and even my relations " and the deareſt friends of my youth wantonly calumniated? Is this the " candid inveſtigation of facts, this the liberality of conduct for " which I have ſo often heard our law and its profeſſors commended? " In my opinion, that mode of enquiry, which now bears down honeſt diffi- " dence and in its turn is borne down by perjured effrontery, is calculated to " eſtabliſh error rather than truth, to afford a triumph to the ſhameleſs vil- " lain, while it ſtrikes truth and integrity with diſmay. As long as it pre- " vails, it will baniſh all fair evidence from our Courts, and throw a diſre- " pute on the whole ſyſtem of our judicial proceedings. For my part, " though I love juſtice and regard my friend, I would his eſtate had remained " for ever in the hands of its wrongful poſſeſſor, and even that a portion of " my own had gone along with it, rather than I had been thus put to open " ſhame in my well deſigned endeavours to reſtore it—ſooner would I have " conſented to the utter oblivion of all our common anceſtors, than have in- " curred ſo much trouble, vexation and indignity in return for my anxiety " to eſtabliſh him—the genuine grandſon of his grandmother."

Here, a loud knocking at the door put an end to my meditations, and my couſin, ruſhing in, ſeized me by the hand, and with great joy informed me that he had obtained a verdict in his favour. He then inſiſted on my going to dine with his attorney, ſo ſtrongly that I could not refuſe, though I really felt aſhamed to ſee him after what had paſſed in his preſence. He, however, treated the matter more lightly than I expected, aſſuring me that the gentleman who had given me ſuch offence, was remarkable for a talent, which he exerciſed indiſcriminately on all occaſions, of *badgering* witneſſes, (as I think he called it) under pretence of croſs examination—It was a practice, he ſaid, that had prevailed ſomewhat, a few years ago, but was every day falling into diſuſe, the moſt venerable characters on the bench having on ſeveral occaſions expreſſed their opinions that too great latitude was ſometimes aſſumed—that it was now diſcountenanced by the ableſt lawyers, and generally diſapproved by the whole profeſſion—and that it even began to fail in its deſired effect on juries, often producing one directly contrary to that which was intended.

This information, which in my particular caſe ſeemed confirmed by the ſucceſs of my friend, calmed my mind and reſtored my tranquillity. I now viewed the provocation of the morning as too contemptible to excite laſting uneaſineſs, and I reſolved to beſtow no further thought on it, after I had tranſmitted a narrative of it with all its circumſtances, to the Flapper, as an uſeful warning to honeſt country witneſſes, as well as a curious ſpecimen of a practice of which the bar in a few years, I firmly hope, will not afford a ſingle living example.

I am Sir, &c.

SIMON PLAINRIGHT.

* * *

The Flapper.

NUMBER LXXIV.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 28, 1797.

Augur, ſchænobates, medicus, magus, omnia———

JUVENAL.

Hard is his taſte who ſtrives to pleaſe you all.

I THOUGHT I had in my early numbers ſufficiently explained to the public the nature and deſign of my work, but letters from correſpondents without number, have convinced me, that I had been miſtaken. I ſelect from among them the following for this day's publication—ſome of them appear to me whimſical enough, and all of them are ſhort.

TO THE FLAPPER, &c. &c.

SIR,

I have had the honour of being unanimouſly elected ſecretary to our club, which for five and twenty years paſt has met in *Winetavern-ſtreet* every Saturday, to diſcuſs the great political queſtions of Europe, to drink our porter, and to read the papers and price current. We have given to the world many valuable treatiſes through the medium of the public prints; but an indignity having been lately offered to one of our moſt reſpectable members, by the rejection of his moſt ingenious work, demonſtrating that Lord *Malmeſbury* never was in *Paris*, we have determined to get a paper entirely into our own hands. I am accordingly directed to acquaint you, Sir, that if it will ſuit your convenience to diſpoſe of the Flapper, we are ready to enter into treaty, and to make reaſonable compenſation for your aſſiſtance. We really regret that your talents ſhould be thrown away on ſubjects which nobody minds, while you neglect the only one which ever was, or ever can be intereſting to our club or to the Iriſh public.

I have the honour to be, with much reſpect,

Your moſt obedient and very humble ſervant.

TIMOTHY COURIER, Secretary of Legation.

MR. FLAPPER,

Angleſea-ſtreet.

Honoured Sir,

I have juſt invented a new razor-ſtrop—quality infinitely ſuperior to any hitherto in uſe—No introducing to public without proper advertiſement, ſo applied to Dr. *Dullman*, an old cuſtomer—Shewed to friends and would not anſwer—No daſh in't and all underſtood. Don't know where to apply, but if you recommend young man in your employ, will pay any thing in reaſon. Muſt conclude with four or five lines of rhyme in ſhape of a *Razor*—Packwood nothing of this ſort yet. No more at preſent from

Your humble Servant,

JOHN SHARP.

Rev. Mr. FLAPPER.

MUCH RESPECTED SIR,

TO me, in common with many other perſons more elevated in the walks of literature, your work has indulged the higheſt gratification—nor vain has been my early anticipation of its long and creditable continuance. To ſo admired a performance to contribute is a taſk worthy the effort of every cultivator of the garden of Parnaſſus, and feeble though my powers, and ſlender my leiſure, I ſhall with joy devote their product. I have juſt drawn up an Epitome of my own hiſtory and ſhould it accord with the plan of your inſtitution, a line left at the Printer's ſhall command it. Many years ſpent I in the Univerſity, and graduated on this laſt, and am at preſent a non-junior aſſiſtant in a claſſical academy in the vicinity of the metropolis. My ſituation of courſe will enable me to interſperſe in my narrative many anecdotes of private families, and to generalize my pages with obſervations on education and humanity. Allow me to ſubſcribe myſelf, with moſt profound reſpect,

Your moſt grateful humble Servant,

As well as conſtant reader and admirer,

CORNELIUS Mc. ALVARY, A. B.

P. S. Pleaſe to tell whether the names of all of us who contribute are not to be publiſhed in the concluding number.

LETTER-BOX.

MERCIER'S, *Angleſea-ſtreet.*

FLAPPER,

WHO the devil are you? and what damn'd fuſs you make about your manners and your morals—what ſort of manners is it to get into company, pick out all you can, and put it in print afterwards?

Tell us your name, and we'll know whether you're a bit better than other people—I'll lay the long odds you're ſome pitiful garret raſcal that is running at a ſubſcription for his works. Aye, and you're a cowardly ſcoundrel too—for you write againſt duelling. But a brace of *Wogden's* will teach you to mend your own manners and let other peoples' alone—Before I finiſh my month at the fencing ſchool, and get through the *Scotch* ſteps with Mr. Hopikicky I'll engage to make you off—I long to have a ſlap at you—five to four I wing the Flapper.

No more at preſent from

TERENCE O'SANGUINE.

FOR THE FLAPPER.

" A reſpectable citizen not an hundred miles from *King's-ſtreet, Oxman-*
" *town*, preſents his compliments to the Flapper, and requeſts he will call
" the attention of the corporation for lighting, &c. to the dangerous ſtate
" of the pavement in that quarter, the grand avenue to the emporium for
" the ſtaple manufacture of our country."

The writer of the above would recommend ſubjects of this ſort, particularly to the notice of the Flapper, by which the work will not fail to be of the greateſt utility to the metropolis. He has ſerved in his pariſh the offices of ſideſman and director of the watch frequently, and that of church-warden ſome years ſince, and as he gives up moſt of his time to the ſearching out

nuiſances

nuiſances, abuſes and grievances of every deſcription; he will be enabled to communicate to the Flapper, (to whoſe paper he promiſes a preference) much uſeful information.

What a treaſure I have for you, dear charming Flapper! All of us have thought all you wanted was intereſting ſtories, for the Adventurer has four times as many—Now I'll ſend you next week, the moſt delightfulleſt novelette!—It never was printed before, and not a living ſoul ever ſaw it except my poor aunt *Polyhymnie's* friends. 'Twill be as good for you as ſix ſtories, for it will take up ſix whole papers from beginning to end. My aunt latterly wrote a bad hand, and ſo I'm getting it all copied out fair. Has not it a darling title?—*Inſulted Senſibility*, or *the Giant of Mangerton*. "Tinctured "with vermeil drops was the ſweetly azure face of the firmament;" it begins—and then goes on the delectable deſcription of the morning on which *Miſs Meadows* was to have been married—But it comes out, poor thing! after all, that ſhe is not married at all—The chapter ends with an heroic ballad called *Griſelda's Patience*—But, perhaps, you might wiſh to print that chapter by itſelf as a fragment—the ſtory would not ſuffer in the leaſt by it.

Oh! but I had almoſt forgot—Why have not you a *Poet's Corner?*—We all of us long of all things for a *Poet's Corner*—do, deareſt F., give us a *Poet's Corner*, and gratify the wiſhes of many of your admirers, and particularly of

MELISSA BLANDFORD.

FLAPPER.

DEAR FLAP.

Will you let off a ſquib for me on Saturday—*Chaſtiſement for a judicial character*—We had ſome words laſt term in his court—Rely on it's being perfectly ſafe and innocent—There are no names mentioned in it—It's all done by daſhes —— ——— and ſtars * * * * * *. Leave a line at the Printer's for

Yours,

E. T.

I beſpeak an hundred of them for circulation. They muſt come out on Saturday morning, for I dine that day with him.

A CARD.

The Company of licenſed Lottery-office keepers of the city of Dublin preſent their reſpectful compliments to the Flapper—they underſtand that certain malicious and evil-minded perſons have been endeavouring to make his publication a vehicle of ill-founded aſperſions on their calling—they do not ſhrink from legal inveſtigation, but ſuch invidious artifices to injure the characters and properties of a company of induſtrious traders and public ſpirited citizens, ſhall always be treated by them with merited contempt. They are happy in the hope, that the Flapper will deem all ſuch utterly beneath his notice.

In common with a grateful public, they beg leave to expreſs their ſincere acknowledgments of the great utility of the plan of his work, and of the felicity of its execution—And with moſt humble reſpect, they requeſt his acceptance of five guinea policies in the Engliſh Lottery, *(which commences drawing in a few days, and for which, ſchemes are now iſſuing at their reſpective offices)* as a ſmall, but honeſt teſtimony of their unfeigned eſteem.

To

To the Conductors of the FLAPPER JOURNAL OFFICE, *Angleſea-ſtreet, Dublin.*

GENTLEMEN,

A young Collegian ſpent a part of laſt Summer in my houſe, and ſpoke very much in your favour: 'twas he told me of your having compleatly accommodated the public, and how much information you poſſeſſed, for which reaſon, I prefer employing you to any of the advertiſing Regiſter Offices in this city.

I never was in Dublin before, and as ſome law buſineſs will bring me up next term, I am prevailed on to bring up my family with me. So I ſhall want a good furniſhed houſe, and if you know of any ſuch, and will engage it for me for three months, I ſhall pay your charge when we ſee one another. I would not go beyond four pounds, or it might be guineas, a month—The houſe muſt be very roomy for my wife, four daughters and two ſons, with a large ſtable and coach-houſe behind for the cattle. James's-ſtreet, or Thomas-ſtreet would anſwer beſt, as my wife has been looking at the map for ſome place at the weſt-end of the town, which has been recommended her, and I may have occaſion to go pretty often to the Market-houſe and the Canal harbour. Pleaſe direct a line to me at Fruit-park,

I am, Gentlemen,
Your humble ſervant,

Dungarvan. MARTIN SAPSCULL.

P. S. I loſt a horſe ſome night's ago, and would wiſh to know whether the Hue-and-Cry is ſtill printed in Dublin, or whether your paper anſwers the purpoſe.

MR. FLAPPER, *Angleſea-ſtreet, Dublin.*

MR. FLAPPER,

SIR,

Pleaſe to ſend me a Stewart's Merlin, bound up with the Dublin Directory—I would not have the Engliſh Regiſtry with it. Send it by the Northern mail which paſſes through our town, and my ſon will call at your ſhop and pay for it next cloth-market.

I hope your partner Mr *Mercier*, was well, when you heard from him.

And am, Sir,
Your humble ſervant,
DUNCAN SHUTTLEWORTH.

Banbridge, Dec. 28th, 1796.

F.

DUBLIN:
Printed by R. E. MERCIER and Co. No. 31, ANGLESEA-STREET.
[Price, Two Pence.]

The Editor will thankfully receive from the Friends of Literature, any communications they may favour him with on the ſubjects appropriated to the nature of this publication.

Perſons deſirous of having this paper ſent to the country, are requeſted to apply to the Clerks of the Roads at the General Poſt-Office.

[A Letter-Box at the Door.]

The Flapper.

NUMBER LXXV.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1797.

At hâc et verborum copia alitur, & eorum conſtructio & numerus liberiore fruitur licentiâ.

CICERO DE ORATORE.

Hence words are abundantly encreaſed, and in the conſtruction and arrangement of them, our orators enjoy a greater licence.

MR. FLAPPER,

YOU have aſſumed an office which, it appears to me, you are too negligent, or too ſplenetic, properly to diſcharge. It is the part of a worthy ſucceſſor of the Spectator, not merely to cenſure what is amiſs, but to praiſe what is excellent. In this part of your office you have failed. You have chidden the public with the gravity of a cynic; you have ridiculed them with the vivacity of a wit; but, except in one or two inſtances, you have ſuffered the various and important improvements of the preſent day, in morals, manners, and letters to paſs unnoticed. Give me leave to obſerve, Mr. Flapper, that it does not become a periodical writer, who from the character which he aſſumes, muſt be ſuppoſed acquainted with life in all its forms, and equally diſpoſed to praiſe or cenſure, as the times deſerve it, to overlook the bright ſide of the ſubjects he treats: It ſavours of the ſour pedant rather than of the liberal and enlightened man of the world—of the recluſe who is buried in the rubbiſh of paſt ages, than of him who floats through the gay and buſy ſcene before him obſerving and obſerved.

Sir, I am myſelf a man of letters, and notwithſtanding I may be marked a little too ſtrongly by the preciſion and formality of the old ſchool, I cannot help admiring, tho' I cannot ſucceſsfully imitate the wonderful improvements which have taken place of late years in many important inſtances, but particularly in the eloquence of our public ſpeakers, the compoſition of our numerous writers, and the converſation and phraſeology of our people of the *better claſs*.—Had you, Mr. Flapper, been as free from prejudice as I am; had you been able to diveſt yourſelf of unreaſonable attachment to early opinions, you would have felt this ſuperiority of the preſent day in theſe inſtances, and it would have been *germain* (as Hamlet ſays) to your character to enquire into the cauſe of it, and endeavour to promote its operation. —For my own part, I confeſs I *have turned the ſubject* (to uſe ſome of the flowers of modern oratory) *in my thoughts* for ſome time, and in ſome meaſure *made up my mind on it*. Frequently have I been tempted to *ſubmit my ideas* on it to the public *thro' the medium* of your publication, and as often have I been deterred by a fear that your prejudice on this queſtion (for moſt of thoſe who are called men of learning I find are prejudiced on this ſubject) would intercept and ſuppreſs them. I have at length, however, determined to make trial, and ſhall, therefore, with the *utmoſt diffidence, take the liberty of offering a few words*.

It ſtrikes me then, Mr. Flapper, that our great improvement in eloquence within a few years is owing to a diſcovery which it is the glory of modern times to have made, and which it is indeed the characteriſtic of modern times to carry into practice, viz.—a diſcovery that all eloquence conſiſts

ſiſts in an abundant and harmonious uſe of words of the ſame identical meaning, added to a happy facility of uſing any words in any ſenſe.

Sir, I could produce numberleſs proofs of this, but that the limits of a ſhort letter would not admit them. I ſhall therefore only refer you to our debates in Parliament, of ſome of which a *ſketch* ſometimes fills twelve or fourteen columns of our newſpapers, while the arguments on both ſides might be contained in a paragraph. I refer you to the addreſſes of candidates to their electors, and to thoſe panegyrics, ſo remarkable for their eaſy, elegant and copious flow, which we ſo often hear from the guilds of weavers and ſmiths, of cooks and of barbers, when they enrol a diſtinguiſhed character in their antient and loyal corporations. But I know you are a man of too much penetration to have ſuffered any of the excellencies of theſe to eſcape you; what I contend for, therefore, is, that it is by the aſſiſtance of this diſcovery, that the extreme thinneſs of meaning in theſe delicate compoſitions has been made ſuſceptible of ſo high a poliſh, and the diſcovery which has given them that capability, I am equally ready to contend for it, is of high value. —Let it not be ſaid (there is none more likely to ſay it than yourſelf, Mr. Flapper) that "as this invention does not enable us to add to our ſtock of "ideas, nor aſſiſt us in comparing or arranging thoſe we already poſſeſs, it "cannot be conſidered as an aid to eloquence." Sir, in my opinion, and, I am perſuaded, in the opinion of the great bulk of our contemporaries, eloquence does not conſiſt, as was formerly believed, in ſaying what is pertinent or wiſe, with grace or elegance, but in ſpeaking with a happy fluency without the labour of thought, and with ſuch harmony of cadence as delights the ear, while it leaves the underſtanding in a ſtate of pleaſing inactivity. Theſe are qualities which undoubtedly exiſt at preſent in a great degree unknown to former times, and which, I think, can fairly be attributed only to this great diſcovery.

It has been ſaid of Dr. Johnſon, that he was too fond of naturalizing Latin, and that he was guilty of pedantic affectation in ſtuffing into Engliſh writing ſo many words from the dead languages—Undoubtedly, Sir, the charge is true; but why did Dr. Johnſon fall into this error? It is becauſe he was too much attached to the narrow rules of what are called the claſſic writers: he would have your faculties all kept on the ſtretch with diſtinct ideas, and he would have you toſs over his voluminous dictionary to find appropriate expreſſions. Sir, it is an honour and an happineſs to modern times, that theſe rules are now exploded. We are not now in danger of falling into Johnſon's error—Our words have by this improvement become pliant, I ſhould rather ſay elaſtic, and are accordingly made to contract or expand their ſignification ſo as to fit ideas of any dimenſions. It is not, therefore, now neceſſary to ranſack the dead languages to convey our meaning with facility, nor need the orator or the author of our day, whom chance happens to encumber with a new thought, cool the ardor of his harangue or interrupt the tenor of his compoſition, by ſtopping to ſeek a word more apt to expreſs it—No! with the boldneſs of a maſter he takes the firſt that offers, and ſupplies the defect of preciſion in his firſt expreſſion by a ſtring of elegant circumlocutions which he rounds into ſonorous periods, and thus enchants his auditory with all the muſic of eloquence—Thus he may be two hours on his legs inſtead of one, *ſpeaking* the whole time; his hearers may depart without a ſingle effort to follow his argument, and if they do not catch his meaning it is ten to one they are no ſufferers.

But to lay aſide orators. To what are we indebted, Mr. Flapper, for that copious and rich variety of new compoſitions that delight the fair ſex, and that profuſion of new political, deiſtical, atheiſtical, &c. &c. &c. tracts which engage the male readers of our day, but to this happy art which gives to the

ſame

ſame thought ſuch an infinite variety of forms, and produces volumes upon volumes without any other materials than ink and paper? Why, in other words, were there not among the antients, as great an abundance of novels, political ſyſtems, eſſays, apologies, &c. &c. as we are bleſſed with? Certainly becauſe they were ignorant of this knack in compoſition. You indeed have aſſigned other cauſes for the non-exiſtance of novels in antiquity: I preſume you overlooked this. You forgot that among the antients, words were more ſcarce than among us, and that even Auguſtus himſelf when in the zenith of his power, declared himſelf unable to make a new one—*Our* greater ability in this way might alone ſecure to us a ſuperiority as well over antiquity as over our immediate predeceſſors—*We* have whole catalogues freſh from the mint, and our old ones we have made capable, indifferently, of any, of every, or of no ſignification. Is not ours then an age of authors ſurpaſſing the Auguſtan?

But, Sir, Eloquence, has received other and very important aid from modern ingenuity. In former times, in order to be eloquent, it was neceſſary for a man to have acquired a fund of knowledge on almoſt every ſubject within the compaſs of the underſtanding. According to Cicero in his dialogue *De Oratore*, (which, as you ſeem to have attached yourſelf to the principles of the old ſchool in eloquence, I ſuppoſe you have read) no man was capable of being an orator until he was firſt a philoſopher, nor could any man ſpeak well on a particular ſubject without making himſelf maſter of its nature and relations. How much above thoſe illiberal notions do we ſoar! It is not more than forty years ſince that great man Cheſterfield broached the idea, that eloquence and ignorance are compatible, and that it requires but a little addreſs and a few flouriſhes, in order to perſuade and delight an audience on even the moſt abſtruſe and ſcientific ſubject: yet in that ſhort time, ſuch is the good ſenſe and aptitude of modern times to catch an improvement, that this great man's maxim has been almoſt univerſally adopted. The church, the ſenate, and even the bar furniſh various inſtances of orators formed on this plan. Every where we meet men who can ſpeak for hours together on ſubjects, of which the orators themſelves know nothing, and not unfrequently ſome who are equally copious on ſubjects which are beyond the reach of any human intellect whatever.

One improvement generally clears the way to another. Accordingly by the general adoption of theſe principles, on which, as I have ſaid, modern eloquence ſeems to be founded, oratory has been *ſimplified* in our time to an aſtoniſhing degree. We have got fixed exordiums which anſwer with equal propriety for all ſubjects. We have got arguments which apply to any queſtion and may be uſed on either ſide of the queſtion; and we have ſtated perorations which the orator may uſe on any occaſion, whether his object be to perſuade or to deter, to exaſperate or to ſoften. It would be tedious to ennumerate the variety of theſe which are at preſent in uſe—I ſhall content myſelf therefore with one or two. Of exordiums, for inſtance, the following which is pretty generally uſed, will anſwer any ſubject at any time or place, provided the perſon who is to uſe it be not the firſt ſpeaker in the debate.

"Mr. Preſident" (Chairman or Speaker as the caſe may be) "The extreme "importance of this queſtion will, I hope, plead my excuſe for preſuming to "take the liberty, unprepared as I am, to trouble you with one or two "words" [you may uſe the phraſe "*half a word*," "*quarter of a word*," or any vulgar fraction *ad libitum*] "in anſwer to ſomething which has *dropt* from "gentlemen on the other ſide. I did not, indeed, intend to trouble you "with any obſervations of mine on this occaſion, nor ſhould I have riſen but "that I find doctrines have been advanced which I cannot ſuffer to paſs in "ſilence. Feeble as I am by perſonal indiſpoſition" [it is no objection to this that the ſpeaker appears ſtrong as a bull] "and exhauſted as we all are by "the lateneſs of the hour and the length of the debate" [I have known this uſed at a very early hour and by the ſecond ſpeaker] "I ſhall certainly treſ-

"paſs

" paſs on you but for a very ſhort time," [this will do when he is not to ſpeak more than two hours].

So much for preface: then for argument a ſpeaker has only to uſe copiouſly that happy weapon—*Interrogatory*—ſuppoſing as he goes along that ſuch anſwers are made as ſuit his purpoſe; for example

" What does the hon. gentleman (or *learned* or *worthy*) mean by the argu-
" ments he has uſed? Does he believe that this aſſembly are to be duped
" by declamation? What, let me aſk the hon. gentleman, will be the conſe-
" quence of this meaſure? Will it not lead to, &c.? Will it not tend to,
" &c.? Will it not produce, &c.? Yet this is the meaſure which the hon.
" gentleman has ſo warmly urged, and which he has ſupported with ſuch
" ingenious ſophiſtry!"

Theſe arguments it is obvious may be continued *ad infinitum:* when the ſpeaker wiſhes to conclude this part of his oration, he may end by

" But, Sir, I ſhall not abuſe your patience by any farther refutation of the
" hon. gentleman's arguments. I flatter myſelf I have already ſhewn them
" to be falſe, futile and frivolous."

Theſe improvements you ſee, Mr Flapper, are ſtriking: But I hear they are about to be carried ſtill *farther* by a machine which I hear is at preſent under trial, and which, like the common hand-organ for *grinding* muſic, is deſigned by a curious mechaniſm to produce a certain number of ſpeeches on both ſides of every great political or moral queſtion, for the uſe of political clubs or tavern diſputants. Whether this machine will ultimately ſucceed, I cannot at preſent ſay; but I am ſure, that however clearly it may prove the ingenuity of the contrivers, and the general *cut* of the times, it can add but little to the extreme facility with which compoſitions of this kind are already produced. How improved, then, the preſent day beyond the ſtupidity of antient times—when Iſocrates for inſtance, ſpent ten years on a ſingle oration!

I have dwelt only on the improvement of our own times, in our particular ſubject—eloquence. How eaſy would it have been, Mr. Flapper, to have expatiated upon the many others which diſtinguiſh us in manners and in converſation. In the latter particularly we have reached perhaps the higheſt point of perfection. By proſcribing from it thoſe topics which excite any warm intereſt, or engroſs and fatigue attention;—we have rendered it a moſt harmleſs inſtrument of ſocial communication. The learned have not now an opportunity of diſplaying their ſuperior arguments.—The moraliſt cannot now become a cenſor; of courſe the ignorance and vice, always the appendages of the multitude, are every where ſecure from detection.—Peace is preſerved, and every man is alike ſecure of having his ſelf-complacence gratified.—The diſtinction between the upper and lower claſſes of mankind is yet exactly marked. The man of faſhion is as completely diſtinguiſhed from the crowd at preſent, by being able to talk without ideas, as in old times he was marked by the rich diſplay of ſuperior information and refined taſte; and a tiſſue of faſhionable phraſes delivered in a *certain ſtyle* of accent and manner, is in our day as ſtrong a proof of good breeding and high life, as was in former days a claſſic elegance of diction, and ſkill in the learned languages. But I conclude, Sir, not indeed in any ſtrong hope that you will agree with me in theſe opinions, for I know you are infuſed with that vice which Quinctilian mentions—*vitio autem malignitatis humanæ vetera ſemper in laude, præſentia in faſtidio eſſe*—of praiſing what is paſt, and deſpiſing what is preſent; but I feel a pleaſure in having thus given my feeble ſanction to improvements, which, tho' generally adopted, and highly important, you have ſuffered to paſs without praiſe or obſervation.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

VERBOSUS.